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# An Analysis of Israeli Domestic Political Characteristics and Their Affect on the Middle East Conflict

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AN ANALYSIS OF ISRAELI DOMESTIC POLITICAL  
CHARACTERISTICS AND THEIR AFFECT ON THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT  
(TITLE)

BY

DAVID HIGHT  
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**THESIS**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1980  
YEAR

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AN ANALYSIS OF ISRAELI DOMESTIC  
POLITICAL CHARACTERISTICS AND THEIR  
AFFECT ON THE MIDDLE EAST CONFLICT

BY

DAVID HIGHT

B.A. in American Studies, Millikin University, 1976

ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
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The conflict in the Middle East is a turbulent situation of great significance to the entire world. This study examines the internal political scene of Israel and its affect on the overall Middle East situation. It focuses on ideology, structure, and policy within Israel as components of that scene.

The ideology of Zionism provided the justification for the creation of Israel and continues to form the basis for governmental decision making there. An analysis of the principles of Zionism and of the statements, writings, and actions of Zionist leaders showed that the ideology could reasonably be interpreted as racist and expansionist.

More important than the ideas of Zionism is the actual implementation of those ideas through government policy. Israeli policy in regard to citizenship, immigration, security, economics, labor, land, and political representation is examined. Important characteristics of Israel's economy are its dependence on foreign capital and assistance and its continuing attempts to attain self-sufficiency. The study shows clearly that discrimination against Arabs and Jews of Asian and African descent living in Israel is widespread and that the rights, benefits, and opportunities for these groups are not equal to those of European and American Jewish immigrants. More significantly, it is indicated that government policy is partly responsible for these inequalities. and has worked to place Western Jews in a superior position in Israeli society.

Another part of Israel's implementation of Zionism has been its action concerning Jewish control of land. From the time of early Jewish immigration to the present, Zionists have attempted to increase the territory inhabited and controlled by Jews. The methods used to accomplish this have included purchase, acquisition of abandoned land, expropriation of inhabited land through expropriation and force, and military invasion of other nations. Israeli expansionism is related to the Zionist principles that Jews should

establish a state with boundaries similar to those of ancient Israel and that all Jews should be gathered into that state. Adherence to these ideas requires territorial expansion and Israeli policy has clearly shown expansionist tendencies.

One of the most significant determinants of policy in any country is political structure. In Israel, structure is dominated by political parties. Israel is a multi-party, parliamentary system in which no party has ever gained a majority in the legislature. Rule by coalition has meant that major policy changes have been difficult to achieve. The Labor Party and its views dominated Israel for thirty years, tempered by the need for negotiations with and concessions to the other parties. In Israel's centralized structure, local government, interest groups, and public opinion are relatively insignificant. In a system with these characteristics and Israel's strong ideological commitment, it could be anticipated that a high degree of policy consistency would exist. This has proven to be true in Israel. Although Begin's Likud government has a different public position on major issues and uses stronger rhetoric, the substance of its actions are similar. It has returned the same land Labor was willing to return and has generally followed Labor's plans for establishing settlements in the occupied territories. Israel's system of multiple parties, parliamentary government, rule by coalition, and centralized government makes policy consistency a significant feature of its politics.

Also contributing to this policy inertia is the nature of leadership in Israel. The structural features mentioned above, the superior position of Western Jews, the historical necessity for Jews to operate secretly, and the limited access to important information in Israeli society have created an elitist system of leadership. The characteristics and views of this elite, and in fact the specific individuals in the elite group, have not changed much in Israel's history.

The ideology of Zionism and the translation of its principles into social structure and government policy has had a tremendous impact on the conflict in the Middle East. It has worked against the creation of good relations between people, cultures, and nations there and prevents a lasting solution to the Palestinian question. Israel can not grant equal rights to Arabs within its borders without compromising Jewish control and it can not allow Palestinian self-determination without giving up territory it needs to accommodate more Jewish immigration to Israel. The country's political structure and the nature of its leadership have contributed to its policy consistency and make major changes unlikely in the future. The most successful force in creating any policy change has been external pressures, particularly from the United States. This is most dramatically illustrated by the Camp David Accords which were a direct result of U.S. mediation efforts. However, Camp David did not succeed in extracting major concessions from Israel or in setting adequate groundwork for a solution to the Palestinian problem. Flexibility on policy questions by Israel is necessary to achieve a fair and permanent solution to Middle East problems. The ideology of Zionism, Israel's political system, and its elite leadership severely restrict Israel's ability to be flexible. Internal change in Israel is a necessary ingredient in the achievement of Middle East peace and stability.



## Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

The conflict in the Middle East between Israel and its Arab neighbors has been an intense one with worldwide repercussions and has the potential to be a dangerously unstable situation. The many issues involved have been investigated, discussed, analyzed, and negotiated by many scholars and policy makers. Always, when carrying out relations with other nations, a country's internal situation is of vital importance. This paper is an attempt to relate Israel's domestic policies and internal structure to the Middle East questions.

The significance of the domestic scene in the formulation of foreign policy has been often noted. In relation to the American context, Dr. Henry Kissinger states that incompatible domestic structures between nations can generate a gulf and become an obstacle to understanding. In such a situation, according to Kissinger, the symbolic aspects of a conflict can come to overshadow the substantive ones.<sup>1</sup> This may be particularly relevant to the case of Israel in which religious and national symbols have played such a great part.

The more basic connection between domestic and foreign policy is described by Marian Irish and Elke Frank, who say, "Responses as well as initiatives in foreign policy are inevitably conditioned by the domestic setting in which policy makers must operate."<sup>2</sup> In addition, the setting in which policy makers have operated in the past affects their view of the world to further condition the nation's foreign policy responses and initiatives.

Inherent in any discussion of Israeli politics is the ideology of Zionism. This ideology, as formulated by leaders of the Zionist movement and as put into practice by the leaders of the Jewish state,



has had and will continue to have great impact on all aspects of Israeli policy. This study will examine ideology, policy, and structure within the state of Israel to provide an overall analysis of the issues raised above.

### Propositions

The study focuses on the following propositions:

1. Ideology, political structure and public policy in Israel combine to form a domestic political scene that has a definite impact upon the nation's foreign policy. The environment in which foreign policy decision-making occurs is conditioned by characteristics of each of the factors. Also, the Israeli domestic situation influences the Arab vision of Israel's nature and purpose, further affecting international relations in the Middle East. This paper will attempt to analyze this domestic environment and determine its effect on the Middle East situation.
2. Because the ideology of Zionism is so important to the politics of Israel, its precepts and its practice must be examined thoroughly. One issue in this examination is whether the ideology is a racist one and whether racial discrimination against Arabs and Jews of Asian and African origins exists in Israel. More significantly, it is necessary to determine if racism is a function of Zionist ideas and of government policy.
3. Another important aspect of the Middle East situation that is affected by Zionism and Israeli policy is land. Critics of Israel have claimed that, based on ideological concepts, the state has

embarked on a continuing plan to extend its boundaries and increase the area under Jewish control. A goal of this paper is to determine if Zionism and Israeli policy have created a program of expansionism.

4. The structure and operation of a political system are major determinants of policy in any country. In Israel, the system is dominated by political parties. This study will examine the development of this system, including the influence of Zionist ideology on that development. Also, the effect of the structure in terms of policy results and the distribution of power and benefits will be analyzed.

5. One noticeable aspect of Israeli politics has been the tremendous success of the Labor Party in maintaining control of the government. Consequently, only a small number of individuals have reached top leadership positions in the state. A topic to be considered here is whether this indicates that Israel has been dominated by an elite during most of its existence and what factors could have created and maintained the elitism. If a political elite has existed, did the election of Menahem Begin and the Likud Party bloc eliminate it and lead to major foreign policy changes?

6. The problem of the Palestinian Arabs, involving their demands for return of land taken over by Jews and for a national homeland, is the crux of the Middle East conflict. Therefore, an important subject of this paper will be how Israel's domestic political situation affects possibilities for a solution to this problem.

7. To provide a more comprehensive view of the Middle East situation and Israel's role in it, two supplemental issues will be studied. One of these is the meaning of the Camp David Accords agreed to by

Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin, and U.S. President Jimmy Carter in September, 1978 and the peace treaty signed by Egypt and Israel in March, 1979. Do they indicate real progress toward an overall settlement involving all parties? Do they represent major changes in Israel's position on major Middle East issues? The other issue is the role of external pressure, particularly from the United States, in the formation of Israeli foreign policy.

Before addressing these specific questions, a brief discussion of the background and the problems of the Middle East conflict is necessary to obtain a general understanding of the situation.

### The Setting

The establishment of the state of Israel and the manner in which it was created have caused immense problems in the Middle East. For centuries a few Jews had chosen to make their homes in Palestine for religious reasons, but in the 1880's a different type of Jew began to enter Palestine with the intent of agriculturally colonizing the land. They came largely because of Eastern European anti-Semitism and because of their belief that the redemption of their people depended on transforming their lives from merchants and financiers into hard working and self-sufficient pioneers. Leo Pinsker's pamphlet Auto-Emancipation was an expression of the thinking behind this immigration, stressing the impossibility of eliminating anti-Semitism and the necessity for Jews to move away from the rest of society. In 1896, the publication of The Jewish State by Dr. Theodor Herzl gave rise to the establishment of the World Zionist Organization. Dr.

Herzl also felt that anti-Semitism was inherent in non-Jews and encouraged Jewish immigration to Palestine. The first Zionist Congress met in Basle, Switzerland in August 1897 and proclaimed its goal of creating a Jewish refuge secured by public law. The use of the term "public law" meant that the Jews were going to seek autonomy in an area under protection of some great power.<sup>3</sup> Between 1881 and 1914, the Jewish population in Palestine rose from 25,000 to 80,000.<sup>4</sup> Most Jews, however, were not motivated to move by the Jewish nationalism of Herzl and the Zionists, but by hardships caused by anti-Semitism.<sup>5</sup>

Seeking the protection of a great power was exactly Herzl's intention as he bargained with the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, and with Great Britain to achieve his goal. Herzl himself was unsuccessful, but under the leadership of Chaim Weizmann, the Zionists obtained from Britain the Balfour Declaration. In this the British government stated that it viewed

with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country." <sup>6</sup>

The European backgrounds of the Zionists allowed them to present their plan as part of the same national expansion movement that European countries had been pursuing themselves. Weizmann indicated his wish to present Zionism within this perspective when he sent a note to the British war cabinet during the Balfour Declaration discussions

which said he hoped "the problem would be considered in the light of imperial interests and the principle for which the entente stands."<sup>7</sup>

Dr. Maxime Rodinson explains efforts to carry out the Zionist plans got under way because of a political decision made by Great Britain under pressure from the Zionist Organization. British reasoning involved gaining support for the war effort from American and Russian Jews plus serving its own interests in the Middle East.<sup>8</sup>

Jewish immigrants to Palestine often purchased land from rich Arab effendi (absentee owners) and then evicted the poorer fellahin who actually lived on the land. This created the original Arab hostility as social intercourse became non-existent and economic ties rare and peripheral.<sup>9</sup> This hostility increased as the Arabs began to feel that Jewish immigration was a threat to their national rights and security. It seemed to them that a foreign power, Britain, had decided, without their consent or participation, that they should sacrifice for the solution of the Jewish problem.<sup>10</sup> The Arabs saw the Balfour Declaration as a breach of British promises, making Israel a product of colonialism.<sup>11</sup> They saw it as an attempt of a European power to impose on them a new and foreign element thanks to its victory over another European power. This was substantiated by British protection of Jewish immigration after World War I when Britain was given the mandate to govern Palestine.<sup>12</sup>

In the 1930's, this opposition surfaced in serious armed clashes between Arabs and Jews. Immigration had drastically increased because of Nazi persecution of Jews. This civil strife subsided somewhat during World War II, but became even more violent following the



war, with both Arabs and Jews engaging in offensive military maneuvers. Often, the British Mandate forces were the victims of this violence as both sides accused Britain of favoring the other. These attitudes created basic problems that still exist today. The Arabs saw Israel as a project of British imperialism, and thus an illegitimate imposition. The Jews, on the other hand, glorified their military action as a fight against British tyranny and aroused the public conscience with the sacred task of saving threatened European Jews. This pushed the Arab problem into the background, distorting the true conflict. Unable to deal with the situation or to satisfy the demands of either side, Britain decided to give up the Mandate in 1947 and put the question before the United Nations.

Several months later, on November 29, 1947 the UN approved a plan to partition Palestine, forming a Jewish and an Arab state. The Jews approved the partitioning but the Arabs rejected it and moved to block its implementation by force. This led to organized warfare between Jews and Arabs. The state of Israel was officially declared on May 14, 1948. The British mandate officially ended that day and Palestine was invaded by Egyptian, Transjordanian, Lebanese, and Syrian forces. After months of fighting Israel had secured an even larger share of Palestinian territory than had previously been allocated in the UN partition. The armistice lines set up at this time were not declared as territorial boundaries, but only to delineate areas beyond which the respective armies could not move.<sup>13</sup> During the fighting, many Arabs living in Palestine fled from areas controlled by Israel into Syria, Transjordan, and the Gaza Strip, becoming refugees.

By 1949, there were an estimated 940,000 of these refugees. A continuing problem in the relations between the Arab states and Israel is who caused and who is responsible for the refugees. The Israelis claim that Arab leaders encouraged their people to leave in order to make it easier for the Arab armies to destroy Israel, after which, all the refugees could return to their homes. The Israeli government has consistently denied that their behavior in the war caused the exodus of Palestinian Arabs. But General Yigal Allon, a prominent Israeli military leader during the 1948 war, said, "While planning the capture of the Arab part of Safed, it was not our intention to prevent the flight of the Arab population." And Israeli battle plans show orders to push the Arab population out of certain parts of the country to establish defensive areas.<sup>14</sup> Also, an example of how the Israelis spread panic among the Arabs with force is the Deir Yassin massacre engineered by the terrorist group Irgun under the leadership of the present Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin. On April 10, 1948, the Irgun killed 200 Arab men, women, and children who had not fled the village. This had an immense impact on the people of the area, and was not an isolated incident. Civilians expected to be annihilated if they fell into the enemy's hands.<sup>15</sup>

Also, there is no substantial evidence that Arab leaders encouraged the evacuation of the refugees. In a study of radio broadcasts of the period, Erskine Childers found that these broadcasts did not call on Arabs to leave and, in fact, advocated that they remain rather than give up land to the Israelis. He believes



it was natural for Arabs to retreat with their troops or to leave during attacks. He says that Arabs were progressively pushed back rather than fleeing the area immediately. He supports his belief by pointing out that many Arabs remain in Nazareth and in Galilee because lightning attacks in these areas left no time to flee.<sup>16</sup>

It appears that the Israeli claim of innocence in the creation of the refugee problem is unfounded and that the Arab belief that fear of Israeli force and general military activity were causes of the Arab exodus is more likely correct. The 1967 war increased Israeli responsibility for the refugees as their invasion of Arab territory drove some refugees further away and extended Israeli territory such that it gained military control over much of the area inhabited by the refugees.

The history of the establishment of the state of Israel created two major problems that have plagued the Middle East ever since. The first is the nature of the state established which was largely determined by the ideology of Zionism and the manner in which it was achieved. The dispossession of the Palestinians, the confirmation of Arab fears about Jewish intentions to create a state in their territory, and a series of military defeats leading to the development of a strong Jewish state in the Middle East, have damaged Arab self-esteem as well as deprived the Palestinian Arabs of the chance to build their own nation and has led to uncompromising intransigence. Many Arabs have refused to admit that Jews have any rights in Palestine. They also claim that the state of Israel continues to base its existence on the violation of the rights of Arab people and on

the expansion of their territorial hegemony.

The Jews, however, have been determined to deny that there are logical, legitimate reasons for the Arab position and blame their animosity on the Arab elite and Britain. Israel claims that the Arab elite has used antagonism toward Jews to distract their people's attention from their poor conditions and to improve their power position within the Arab world. It also accused Britain from yielding too much to Arab demands and forcing the Jews to fight to achieve their goal.<sup>17</sup> Israel holds that its State is based on the historic rights of the Jewish people to live in Palestine and that its position is based on the right of the state to exist in peace.

The second important problem is the question of the Palestinian Arabs, many of whom were made refugees by the creation of Israel. This is widely considered to be the crux of the Middle East conflict and has been often discussed by the United Nations, the most recent debate held in August, 1979. Since Israel denies responsibility for creating the problem, it also refuses to take responsibility for reaching the solution. It believes that refugees should be permanently settled in the existing Arab states where they would have a common cultural link and opportunities to improve their economic position. The Israelis also do not wish to seriously discuss Palestinian Arab rights until terrorist activities directed against Israel are stopped. The Arabs believe, however, that Israel should repatriate and compensate the refugees or allow a Palestinian homeland to be created on territory now controlled by Israel. They are especially adamant about the land conquered by Israel in the 1967 war,

demanding its return to the countries it was taken from or its conversion into a Palestinian entity.

These two fundamental disagreements form the basis of the Middle East confrontation. It is the purpose of this study to analyze how the ideology, domestic political structure, and particular domestic policies of Israel contribute to the creation, continuation, and potential solution of these problems.

### Methodology and Sources

This study of Israel's domestic political scene is basically an empirical one. It relies on facts discovered through research to explain what situation exists in Israel, how it operates, and why it is that way. These explanations are then analyzed as components of the overall Middle East conflict. The empirical method was employed because it presents a more accurate and complete view of the issues involved. The Middle East conflict has been characterized by emotional charges and accusations. In this clash of nations and cultures, it would be difficult to produce a meaningful analysis of the situation based on a normative position of what ought to be. Therefore, a determination of what is, through an empirical approach to the subject, is most appropriate. However, that does not mean that this study will consist of a listing of facts. Judgments have been made as to what should be emphasized and facts have been interpreted as to their full meaning.

This study cannot be confined to one area of political science but must include structural, behavioral, and theoretical aspects. This requires the use of both primary and secondary sources. In the

case of Israel, the unique development of the state necessitates the use of an historical approach to some of the problems involved. Some statistical analyses from secondary sources will be used as will some descriptions and examinations of Israel's political structures and institutions. In all of these cases, I will interpret the evidence presented and sometimes rely on the interpretations of others, as it relates to the subject under investigation. In considering the development of Zionist ideology and its influence on Israeli policy, historical analysis will be important. The evolution of ideas put forward by Zionist leaders is important for understanding the theoretical foundations for the policy choices of Israel and the activities of its leaders. Ideology can limit policy alternatives, justify actions of leaders, and affect election results. In general, it provides a theoretical framework for decision-making within the state. The pattern of Zionist thought must be studied thoroughly and must be related to policy choices made before and after the establishment of Israel and to the structures created within the state. This naturally includes fundamental tenets of Zionism, but also involves revisionist ideas that gained dominance within the movement or were rejected by the Zionist mainstream. One important object of this study is to determine which Zionist ideas did become predominant and had the greatest effect on Israeli politics. To do this, the works of the most important Zionist leaders and thinkers have been studied. Theodor Herzl, Leo Pinsker, David Ben-Gurion, Ahad Ha'am, Martin Buber, Chaim Weizmann, Golda Meir, Menahem Begin and others have been studied in an effort to understand all aspects of Zionism. I have

chosen to emphasize the writings and statements of people engaged in the actual creation of Israel rather than pure theoreticians because as practitioners of the ideology, they will give a more accurate view of the Zionist ideas that provide the basis for state policies. Secondary interpretations of Zionism and its leaders have also been important in that they helped to focus my opinions on the meaning and effect of Zionism.

The discussion of Israeli domestic policy also involves some historical examination but, for the most part, is confined to the time period since the establishment of Israel. Statistical information will provide evidence as to policy choices and policy performance in the Jewish state relating to such areas as land, labor, education, political representation, economics, and others. Particular laws and regulations of the state also serve as a guide to Israeli policy as do statements and reports of Israeli leaders. Secondary works provide the major source of information in this area, including sociological studies of the effect of Israeli policies in addition to descriptions of the policies themselves. Newspapers, periodicals, and Israeli government publications were used to report more recent developments.

The validity and objectivity of sources had to be considered in weighing the evidence. The Journal of Palestine Studies is published by the Institute for Palestine Studies and Kuwait University and is oriented to the Arab point of view. It presents scholarly studies of the issues, not emotionally inspired essays. The same can be said about the U.S. publication Commentary which takes the Jewish position.



Middle East International, published in London, combines news presentations with essays by English and American reporters and scholars. It presents a pro-Arab view, but does include news stories written in the Israeli press. The Palestine Digest and The Link are both decidedly biased in favor of the Arabs and their information is regarded accordingly. However, they do present some documented facts not available elsewhere. Current History and Foreign Affairs are basically moderate in their approach to the Middle East. Both are scholarly and sometimes analytic journals with relative objectivity. Being American publications using primarily American authors, there is sometimes an apparent bias toward Israel as a U.S. ally.

As for the political structure of Israel, secondary sources have been the sole source of information. Studies by Leonard Fein, Michael Brecher, and W. F. Abboushi have been of prime importance here.<sup>18</sup> This area includes examination of political parties and their subsidiaries like the Histadrut labor union and the Jewish Agency fund raising group, non-partisan political movements, and elections. The effect of these groups and processes on policy will be analyzed and put into the perspective of the entire Middle East picture.

The use of these approaches and these sources should allow an adequate investigation of the propositions previously stated.

#### Contribution to Political Science

The propositions being studied in this paper are relevant to one of the most potentially explosive world situations. The alignment of great powers, the presence of nuclear weapons in Israel, the

oil power of the Arab states, and the appearance of the conflict as one between the imperialist West and developing nations brings great and complex forces into confrontation in the Middle East. The creation of a just and lasting solution is necessary to insure future world stability. Political scientists, being students of the human relations and structural conditions involved in social and governmental decision-making, have a duty to present the relevant facts and interpret them in order to establish a foundation for the solution of problems.

In this paper, an attempt is made to study one aspect of the Middle East situation in order to make a contribution to the complete understanding of the problem. To reach a truly comprehensive solution, the immediate negotiating points must not be the only things considered. The reasons for animosity, the ideological differences, and the influence of domestic structures and policies cannot be ignored. As stated earlier, foreign policy initiatives and responses are always conditioned by the domestic situation. Policy makers should be aware of this and consider it when making decisions. Again, the political scientist is in a position to aid policy makers by presenting evidence and forming reasonable opinions based on it.

As a contribution to the science itself, this paper may serve as a practical study of the influence of domestic politics on international relations. It could also be an example of how an ideology can come to dominate a system and have impact on its decisions. In addition, it may show the importance of structures like political parties, legislatures, quasi-political institutions, and election



systems in affecting policy makers; their view of the world, their range of alternatives, and their decisions.

Possibly the most important contribution this study can make is to dispel some myths about Israel in a general search for truth. Israel has long been accepted as a bastion of freedom in an oppressive area; as the only democracy in the Middle East; and as a truly liberal, almost utopian socialistic state that represents the Western view of humanitarianism. Perhaps it is because the West can relate more easily to the European-oriented Israeli society than to the unfamiliar Arabs, or because of a collective sense of guilt over the inhuman Nazi persecution of Jews, or because Israel has consistently allied itself with the Western bloc against the Communists, that Israel is accepted so readily. The true nature of the state of Israel and the ideology of Zionism have not effectively been made known to the United States public. Knowledge about the realities of Israel and Zionism is valuable for its own sake.

## Chapter 2      ZIONIST IDEOLOGY

Ideology is not a transitory thing which can be changed to fit a situation. Social institutions and economic enterprises are based on ideology. It exists in textbooks and in the minds of teachers, thus shaping the minds of the young. Political parties adopt philosophies that guide their behavior. So an ideology is an important part of any political system. In the case of Israel, Zionist ideology was the reasoning and justification behind the existence of the state itself, and is still an integral part of its political system. It plays an important role in determining Israel's posture toward its neighboring states and in the setting of domestic policies and priorities.

The Zionist movement was directed toward the single goal of establishing a national home for all Jewish people to be located in Palestine. The ideology behind the movement was based on two fundamental tenets: 1) That Jews throughout the world constitute a nation; and 2) That anti-Semitism is inherent in non-Jews and is incurable. Leo Pinsker's Auto-Emancipation was an early and significant publication in the Zionist movement. In it he said,

Judeophobia is a psychic aberration. As a psychic aberration, it is hereditary; as a disease transmitted for 2000 years it is incurable...So fight against such an hereditary form is in vain. All people hate the Jews.<sup>1</sup>

Theodor Herzl, who founded the Zionist organization and led the movement in its early years, presented similar ideas in his book, The Jewish State. He claimed that the Jews were one people and that wherever they lived anti-Semitism would exist. He said, "Every single one of the nations in whose midst Jews live are shamefacedly

or brazenly anti-Semitic."<sup>2</sup> More recent Zionists have continued using the same ideas. Chaim Herzog, Israeli ambassador to the UN during the administration of Yitzhak Rabin said, "I believe that the fundamental cause of anti-Semitism is that the Jew exists."<sup>3</sup> Herzl and other leaders felt that anti-Semitism could not be cured through enlightenment or assimilation and that the only solution was a separate state for the Jews. The historical, religious, and emotional attachment of the Jewish people to Palestine made it the natural choice to be their homeland. In fact, redemption of the Jewish people depended upon reunification with the Land of Israel, especially to Eastern European Jews. Martin Buber described a fundamental relationship between Jewish people and the Land of Israel. Fulfillment of commandments and settlement of the land are linked together according to Buber. He stated that, "The world can be redeemed only by the redemption of Israel and Israel can be redeemed only by reunion with the land."<sup>4</sup>

Herzl's ideal conception of this homeland was an admirable one. He did not believe nations were ready for unlimited democracy but no member of the Jewish state would be discriminated against. He was opposed to theocracy and thought every person should be free and undisturbed in his faith and his nationality. Equality before the law for people of all creeds and nationalities should be practiced.<sup>5</sup> This view of the state was expressed in Herzl's 1902 book Altneuland. It describes a Palestine aided by modern technology and methods in which a progressive, cooperative society thrived. As Walter Laquer interprets it,

Women are fully emancipated, education is free, criminals are not punished but re-educated. There is a division of church and state and full freedom of conscience. Tolerance is the supreme principle on which the state is based.<sup>6</sup>

As to dealing with the Arabs in Palestine, there are many noble sentiments and ideas expounded by Zionists. Herzl put it this way:

My testament to the Jewish people: so build your state that a stranger will feel contented among you...It would be immoral if we would exclude anyone, whatever his origin, his descent, or his religion from participating in our achievements.<sup>7</sup>

Writer and historian Hans Kohn believed that Herzl thought that a national, chauvinistic party which wished to make Jews a privileged element was a betrayal of Zion.<sup>8</sup> Other Zionists seemed to envision the same type of state as Herzl. Yitzhak Epstein advised the Seventh Zionist Congress to enter into an alliance with the Arabs and warned that encroaching upon the rights of a proud and independent people such as the Arabs would be dangerous.<sup>9</sup> David Eder, the first diplomatic representative of World Zionist Organization President Chaim Weizmann, formulated a cooperative Zionist policy with four major points: 1) Jews must not segregate themselves from Arabs; 2) Tel Aviv must not become a symbol of Jewish exclusiveness; 3) Jews should deal with the Arab world as a whole and show the same respect for Arab national aspirations as they demanded for their own; 4) As an Oriental people, Jews should abandon their pretensions to be Europeans.<sup>10</sup> Even so staunch a Zionist as David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first Prime Minister, told the Anglo-American Committee of Enquiry on Palestine in 1946,

We will have to treat our Arab and other non-Jewish neighbors...as if they were Jews but make every effort that they should preserve their Arab characteristics, their language, their Arab culture, their Arab religion, their Arab way of life, while making every effort to raise their standard of life.<sup>11</sup>

Weizmann, who was also the first president of Israel, expressed it simply when he said, "The world will judge the Jewish state by what it will do with the Arabs."<sup>12</sup>

This general view of concern for Arabs and Arab rights was expressed in extreme form by a wing of the Zionist movement known at different times as Brit Shalom (1925), Kedmah Misraha (1936), and Ihud. It included such thinkers as Ahad Ha'am, Martin Buber, Judah Magnes, and Ernest Simon. These groups wanted to give up the idea of a Jewish state for a binational one in which Jews and Arabs would enjoy free development along with full political, social, and civil rights. Their thinking was based on Western humanism rather than the colonialist approach of some of the Zionists.<sup>13</sup> Some of their ideas originated with Moses Hess, a contemporary and follower of Marx, who posited the link between the Jewish people and Palestine before the existence of any Zionist movement. Hess thought a Jewish presence in Palestine could reconcile modern Occidental culture with Oriental culture, rather than serve as Herzl stated, as a "wall against Asia."<sup>14</sup> To Ahad Ha'am, Zionist writer and philosopher, the creation of a state was merely a way to reach the goal of Zion, which was to revive Jewish cultural values.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, any violation of Arab rights would betray the ultimate goal because it would not fit Jewish values. He also thought Palestine was unsuitable for the



solution to the Jewish problem because it was inhabited by others with national interests and the Jewish historical right to Palestine did not override the tangible right of the Arabs, based on generations of life and work on the land.<sup>16</sup> Buber disagreed with Ha'am here, emphasizing the link between Palestine and the redemption of the Jewish people. However, both believed protection and respect for Arab rights was essential in making Israel an authentically Jewish state. These men were interested in solving the more abstract problem of Judaism rather than simply solving the particular problem of Jews. Political activity was not sufficient for this. It had to be accompanied by the moral strengthening of the Jewish consciousness.

However, the views of these groups were attacked by other Zionists and were not incorporated by the majority of the movement. Other Zionist leaders held negative attitudes toward the Arabs, ranging from invisibility and indifference to hostility based on feelings of Jewish superiority as well as a desire to achieve their goals. When the Zionist movement was beginning, most Jewish attitudes toward Arabs were based on invisibility and indifference. They did not often recognize the existence of Palestinian Arabs and did not see the importance of the problems that could come from confronting them. Many early Zionist writings reflected racial prejudice based on 19th century nationalistic concepts and the general view of European supremacy. To most Zionists, Palestine provided a land without people for a people without a land. For example, Zionist leader Max Nordau, upon hearing from Herzl that there were Arabs living in Palestine said, "I didn't know that. We are committing an injustice."<sup>17</sup>

Zionists saw Palestine as an empty, barren land and saw themselves as representing the apogee of civilized development.<sup>18</sup> During this period, Zionists were emphasizing immigration, land purchase, and political maneuvering to gain support and protection for their plans. Their attention was primarily directed to the Turks, Germans, and British rather than dealing directly with Palestinian Arabs. They were hardly concerned with Arab reaction to their activities. Objection to Jewish colonization was seen by the Zionists, not in terms of the rights of existing residents but as a collusion of political powers.<sup>19</sup> For example, in their writings, Weizmann and Begin never recognize the legitimacy or significance of Arab opposition or national aspirations. Weizmann could not understand pro-Arab decisions under the British mandate because he thought that what the Jews wanted should always come first and was blind to the British obligation to the Arabs. Begin barely acknowledged Arab nationalism, except to say it was initiated by the British, whom he saw as the major opponent to the Jewish state. In general, the early Zionists, being Europeans, followed the national chauvinism of 19th and early 20th century Europe in not seriously considering an area's existing population and the effect of their actions on them.

After the establishment of the state, some aspects of this invisibility concept still remained. It led to the idea that the Jews were entirely responsible for the development of Palestine. Many first generation leaders, including Golda Meir and David Ben-Gurion retained the concept for a long time. As late as 1969, Meir said, "There is no such thing as Palestinians."<sup>20</sup> In 1976, Yitzhak Rabin



stated that Arabs in Israel had no national characteristics of their own.<sup>21</sup>

When Zionists did recognize the existence and aspirations of Arabs, more blatant racism often occurred and many extremists asserted Jewish superiority to the Arabs. Max Nordau, in a speech to the Zionist Congress, said Jews are "more industrious than the average European, not to mention the moribund Asiatic and African."<sup>22</sup> William Ziff's 1937 book, The Rape of Palestine, contains many racist comments, depicting Arabs as barbarians and using stereotypes about the physical appearance, sexual habits, violent nature, and lack of intelligence of Arabs. He described the Islamic world as having "debased moral standards, superstitions, and bigoted ignorance," while Jews were superior, intelligent, and "the best colonizing material in the world." He also claimed a lack of racial consciousness among Moslems and a willingness to accept anyone into their religion has made the Arabs "a motley assortment of peoples, low in the scale of human development, who speak the Arab tongue."<sup>23</sup>

The 1967 war and the subsequent takeover of territory by Israel forced the ultimate recognition of the Palestinians. But the Israeli attitude was that Palestinian nationalism was artificially created by a reaction to Zionism and was not a true national movement. After this recognition of the Palestinians, Jews justified taking over their land with two points: 1) The Jewish need was greater; and 2) that Jews are superior to Arabs. Often this was done by creating a negative image of the Arabs. J. L. Talmon said in Israel Among the Nations that Arabs are "terribly inhibited and handicapped by neurotic

impediments and overstrained susceptibilities."<sup>24</sup> Creating these negative images was part of an attempt to undermine the Arab position as irrational. Robert Alter said in a 1968 issue of Commentary that, "The Arab position in Israel...has been blind, fanatic, self-deceptive, self-destructive, harshly inflexible, in many respects morally obscene."<sup>25</sup> These ideas indicate an extremely poor view of Arabs who are seen as barbaric, neurotic, as incapable of having a real nationalism, as being duped by their irrational leaders, and whose decisions are therefore, not to be taken seriously.

More prominent Zionists also displayed attitudes about the cultural and social inferiority of the Arabs. Weizmann wrote in his autobiography that the Arab national movement was "crude in nature, which tries to work up the hatred of the British and the Jews, looks to Hitler and Mussolini as its heroes, and is supported by Italian money."<sup>26</sup> David Ben-Gurion, who epitomized Israel and the Zionist movement for many years, is especially illustrative of racist attitudes. It is easy to find statements by Ben-Gurion expressing concern and sympathy regarding Arabs. But he has also indicated many times his disdain for Arabs and their culture. His actions (including organizing strikes where Arabs were employed) showed he believed there was no place for Arabs in Israel. Ben-Gurion once said, "faith in my fellow man makes me confident that the wretched and degrading effect of the Arab heritage will not last forever."<sup>27</sup> Ben-Gurion despised the Arab way of life and warned publicly against the danger that Israel might become another Levantine country. The word "Levantine" is often used in Israel as a derogatory term indicating a lack

of culture and intelligence. Ben-Gurion believed in attaining a purely Jewish community and thought for this purpose the fewer Arabs living in Israel the better. He learned Spanish for the sole reason of reading Don Quixote in the original but never bothered to learn Arabic, which is closely related to Hebrew. In his first ten years as Prime Minister, Ben-Gurion never visited an Arab town or received an Arab delegation.<sup>28</sup> Besides having a low opinion of Arabs, Ben-Gurion also had an inflated view of Jews. He declared, "I believe in our moral and intellectual superiority and our capacity to serve as a model of redemption for the human race."<sup>29</sup>

Ideas of that kind led some Zionists to call for eliminating the Arab presence in Palestine through land expropriation, land purchase, and force. Josef Weitz, former head of the Jewish Agency Colonization Department, said in 1940 and repeated in 1967 that,

Between ourselves, it must be clear that there is no room for both peoples together in this country...We shall not achieve our goal of being an independent people with the Arabs in this small country. The only solution is Palestine, at least Western Palestine, without Arabs. And there is no other way but to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighboring countries; to transfer all of them; not one village, not one tribe should be left.<sup>30</sup>

The idea of removing Arabs from Israel in order to form a Jewish state is not a modern one. Herzl himself once said, "the penniless population" of Palestine should be "spirited across the borders" and "denied employment in our country." He also said, "We must expropriate gently the private property" of Palestinian Arabs.<sup>31</sup> But Revisionist Zionist Vladimir Jabotinsky and his followers saw no need for gentility in their actions. The Arabs were not invisible to Jabotinsky,

who described them as "a yelling rabble dressed up in gaudy, savage rags."<sup>32</sup> He said in 1930 that a Jewish state meant "first of all a Jewish majority in Palestine so that under a democratic rule, the Jewish point of view will always prevail."<sup>33</sup> Jabotinsky and the Revisionists knew that creating this majority would bring inevitable Arab opposition and believed they would have to fight politically and militarily to overcome it. They supported mass immigration, land expropriation, disregard of Arab rights, and violence to achieve their goal. This view was opposed by Weizmann and his followers, who favored less aggressive policies, hoping to reach some conciliation with the Arabs. But Jabotinsky's view became extremely popular, causing the Zionists to adopt a more violent approach. In fact, by 1947, according to a former President of Hebrew University, Judah Magnes, the entire movement had accepted Jabotinsky's view about the necessity of force. Ben-Gurion, who had been a bitter enemy of Jabotinsky, held an attitude scarcely different than his regarding the Arabs and eventually realized most of his aims.

This narrower Revisionist Zionism is not drastically different than moderate or sympathetic Zionism. Racist ideas have been expressed by nearly every Zionist thinker and leader, including Herzl, Weizmann, and Ben-Gurion. Jabotinsky differed from the others in style and bluntness more than in substance. Opposition to Jabotinsky was based on the existing political configuration and fears that his tactics would upset diplomatic efforts. It was not because of any ethical considerations or because of a desire to make brothers of the Arabs. The precepts of Zionism and the way they have been

interpreted in light of existing political realities can be construed as racist. The views of later Zionists are logical developments of earlier Zionist thought. The desire for creating a purely Jewish state meant that there would necessarily be conflict with the existing Arab population. In order to achieve their goals and justify their actions, it was inevitable that racist ideas would appear and then dominate within the Zionist movement.

Naturally, the creation of a Jewish state could not become a reality without land. Once the acquisition of land in Palestine by Jews had begun, it was inevitable that the land under Jewish control would increase. The Zionist movement has always had an expansive tendency in the sense that it sought from the first to acquire territory that it did not initially possess. It cannot be seriously questioned whether the Zionists always intended to exercise complete control in a Jewish homeland. The creation of a cooperative, bi-national state with the Arabs was not part of Zionist plans. It was always intended that a Jewish majority be established to allow for Jewish dominance in decision making. These intentions are widely documented in the writings and statements of Zionist leaders. For tactical reasons, the goal of the Jewish state was not always clearly expressed and loudly pronounced, but a study of Zionist statements and actions leaves no doubt that a separate state was always their goal.

In 1917, Ben-Gurion stated that, "We must create a Jewish majority in the Land of Israel in the next twenty years. That is the central issue in this new historical situation."<sup>34</sup> Later he wrote,



At the present time, we speak of colonization and only of colonization. It is our short term objective. But it is clear that England belongs to the English, Egypt to the Egyptians, and Judea to the Jews. In our country there is room only for Jews. We will say to the Arabs: 'Move over;' if they are not in agreement, if they resist, we will push them by force.<sup>35</sup>

Besides Ben-Gurion, nearly all important Zionist leaders, including Pinsker, Herzl, Buber, Weizmann, and Jabotinsky emphasized Jewish immigration to Palestine in order to build a Jewish majority as a foundation for the Jewish state.

The 14,920 square kilometers granted to the Jewish state by the United Nations in the 1947 partitioning of Palestine was not what the Zionists had originally hoped to gain.<sup>36</sup> It appears that most Zionists wanted the Jewish state to embrace a much wider area to accommodate the influx of a large number of Jews. Martin Buber claims that one of the reasons the Zionists preferred Palestine as the site for their state was that it offered the possibility of expansion into a greater Palestine.<sup>37</sup> Rael Jean Isaac, author of Israel Divided, reports that before British pressure, the Zionists agreed among themselves that the future Jewish state should claim territory greater than that controlled by Jews in ancient periods, in order to incorporate the areas where past invasions had come from.<sup>38</sup> The Israel of Herzl's Altneuland extended to the Euphrates River and included Beirut and other parts of Lebanon. Similar boundaries were suggested by the Zionist Organization of America in 1917. The Zionist delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919

called for the inclusion of Transjordan and southern Lebanon.<sup>39</sup>

Appearing before the Palestine Royal Commission, Vladimir Jabotinsky presented a plan for Jewish development that included both sides of the Jordan River and asked the British to open Jordan to Jewish penetration.<sup>40</sup> In the mid-1930's, Ben-Gurion presented a similar plan, transforming the entire ancient Land of Israel on both sides of the Jordan River into a Jewish state.<sup>41</sup> Ben-Gurion stated his ideas on Israel's boundaries clearly at a military parade in 1948 when he said,

victory will not be consummated until the pioneering effort of our nation in Israel and the Diaspora gathers all the exiles into the liberated homeland - until the desolation of this country is reclaimed to its maximum extent.<sup>42</sup>

Earlier in that same year he had stated that "a nation declaring its independence does not have to define its boundaries" and reasoned that land captured through military victories would be added to the state.<sup>43</sup> Subsequently, the National Administration voted 5-4 in favor of Ben-Gurion's position and decided not to include boundaries in Israel's Declaration of Independence.<sup>44</sup> This seems to be a clear indication that Israel did not intend to place permanent limits on its territory. Israel's current Prime Minister Menahem Begin declared in The Revolt that,

the partition of the homeland is illegal. It will never be recognized...It will not bind the Jewish people. Jerusalem was and will be forever our capital. Eretz Israel will be restored to the people of Israel. All of it. And forever.<sup>45</sup>

In 1944, the convention of the Zionist Organization of America



adopted a resolution calling for a Jewish Commonwealth which "shall embrace the whole of Palestine, undivided and undiminished." The same stand was adopted by the World Zionist Conference in 1945.<sup>46</sup>

This commitment to the concept of Eretz Israel, an emotional attachment to all of Palestine where all Jews would be united to form a great civilization, is actually official Israeli policy. The central task of the state, as defined by law is not to protect or improve the lives of its citizens, or to foster and exemplify a more ethical way of life; but is to gather in all the "exiles".<sup>47</sup> Jews not living in Israel are considered to be exiled in the Diaspora and it is the prime purpose of the state of Israel to bring them there. This policy means that Israel has always planned to expand in order to accommodate this ingathering. Israeli leader Yigal Allon confirmed this part of Israeli ideology in 1968, saying, "Our duty to populate Greater Israel is no less important than in the past, when it was a mandate and the rally of the Beisan; he who doubts this truth doubts the entire Zionist conception."<sup>48</sup> So, the "central task" of the state of Israel and the "entire Zionist conception" depend upon immigration and the population of additional land areas.

The effect of such an ideological base could easily have been predicted. It has made Zionism appear to be a threat to Arab territorial, political, and cultural sovereignty in Palestine. The Zionists have justified their acquisition of land and effective establishment of political control over it in a variety of ways. Some pointed out the discrimination against Jews in liberal Western nations and persecution of them in less liberal nations. It was felt

that the only way for Jews to achieve freedom was to create their own state, and that need was so great that negative consequences of their actions could be ignored. Some cultural Zionists believed a Jewish homeland would revive a morally and intellectually valuable culture that would be of great benefit to the world. The religious argument has been expressed by Martin Buber in this way,

With however little or much right in each case the nations can accuse each other of being robbers, their charge against Israel is totally unjust because it acted under authority and in the confident knowledge of their authorization. The revelation, the faith in it, and the action following from this faith are what differentiate Israel from the other peoples, not merely 'religiously,' but also historically...no other people has ever heard and accepted the command from heaven as did the people of Israel.<sup>49</sup>

After the birth of Israel, even more reasons for expansion were cited by the Zionists. The security of their newly constituted state surrounded by hostile neighbors led Israel to expansionist moves in order to gain strategic advantage, to obtain foreign policy momentum, or to keep their adversaries on the defensive. But regardless of the justification offered, it is undeniable that achievement of the Zionist movement's goals depended upon taking over land that was not originally theirs and that continued adherence to Zionism necessarily commits Israel to further expansion.

The ideology of Zionism was the driving force behind the effort to create Israel and still guides the policy decisions of the current Israeli government. Therefore, it is an important factor in determining the nature of the Jewish state. Logically developed, the

ideas presented by a wide variety of Zionist leaders and theoreticians lead to the conclusion that Zionism is both racist and expansionist. The United Nations has defined racial discrimination as

any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.<sup>50</sup>

The Zionist doctrine is one which calls for a state that places Jews in a superior position in the society in order to protect the Jewishness of the state. Also, the comments of Zionist leaders reveal racist tendencies, varying from indifference and invisibility to a disregard for Arab rights and a belief in Jewish superiority. As Noam Chomsky, MIT linguistics professor and student of the Middle East said,

If Israel is to be both a democratic state and a Jewish state, then non-Jews must be expelled...the respects in which the state is 'Jewish' will be the respects in which non-Jews are denied equal rights. Thus, democratic principles are violated when a state discriminates between two categories of citizens.<sup>51</sup>

A state which seeks to acquire territory from others in order to provide for the mass influx of a large number of people must necessarily be expansionist. In the case of Israel, the mystical notions of attachment to the Holy Land make expansion more likely as a method to achieve national purpose and unity.

A complete analysis of Israel's domestic politics requires

discussion of the policies carried out by the state. The way in which Zionism is actually implemented in the Jewish state is of more significance to the situation than the ideology itself.

### Chapter 3 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ZIONISM IN THE STATE OF ISRAEL

After examining Zionist thought and drawing conclusions as to its ultimate implications, it is necessary to test the practical validity of those conclusions. The most meaningful test, of course, is to view the actual conditions in the Jewish state. If Zionism really is racist and expansionist, this should be reflected in Israeli social structure and domestic policy, including activities in the occupied territories. Zionism is a complex ideology with varying wings and subject to varying interpretations. However, this chapter will show which wings and which interpretations are, in reality, emphasized by the society and the government. The transformation of ideology into practice and the situation that has been created more clearly define the nature of the state and allow a more accurate judgment on the foreign policy ramifications of domestic conditions.

Theoretically, for the Zionists to create and maintain a truly Jewish state in an area where Arabs were a great majority, either the Arabs had to be expelled or a regime of occupation giving Arabs second class citizenship would have to be installed. Israel has practiced both approaches in order to increase Jewish control in the state. Legal structure, institutional structure, and administrative practice must be studied to determine if discrimination against non-Jews is practiced in or by the state. Also, a study of Israel's policies with regard to land and territory is necessary to make a judgment on its expansive nature. These issues will be addressed by analyzing the purpose and effect of various domestic policies, and by studying historical examples of Israel's attempts to expand its area



of control.

### Citizenship, Immigration, and Emergency Regulations

Israeli citizenship laws give advantages to Jews while making citizenship difficult for native Arabs to attain. The "Law of Return" grants Israeli citizenship to any Jew living anywhere in the world. But Arabs born in what is now Israel and who fled during conflicts are not allowed citizenship unless they are naturalized. This naturalization process can be very difficult. It is only possible by proving birth in Israel, residence there for three out of five years preceding application for citizenship, intention to permanently settle there, and sufficient knowledge of Hebrew. Even after meeting these requirements, the Minister of the Interior still has discretion to grant or refuse citizenship.<sup>1</sup> This has resulted in the denial of citizenship to about one fifth of the Palestinian Arabs living in Israel.<sup>2</sup> These laws appear to be discriminatory since they automatically grant to the world's Jews rights which are withheld from part of the native population of non-Jews.

Israel's Declaration of Independence establishes the "ingathering of the exiles" as the fundamental purpose of the state. Any Jews living outside Israel are considered to be in the Diaspora and exiled from their natural homeland. So the state has actively sought to stimulate Jewish immigration to Israel while discouraging the return of Palestinian Arabs to land they had left during military conflicts. Count Folke Bernadotte, a UN mediator for the Middle East, said in 1948,

It would be an offense against the principles of elemental justice if these victims of the

conflict are denied the right to return to their homes while Jewish immigrants flow into Palestine, and indeed offer at least the threat of permanent replacement of the Arab refugees who have been rooted in the land for centuries.<sup>3</sup>

Israeli immigration policy has been aimed at, and has effectively accomplished this goal of permanent replacement. Between 1918 and the establishment of the Jewish state on May 14, 1948, the Jewish population in Palestine rose from ten per cent of the total population to thirty per cent.<sup>4</sup> In 1976, it was reported that 85.1% of Israeli population was Jewish.<sup>5</sup> Such a drastic increase was made possible by a strong commitment to attracting Jews and to discouraging entrance by non-Jews. In fact, a variety of tactics that will be discussed in detail later were used to encourage the migration of Palestinian Arabs out of Israel. Sociologist Alex Weingrod explains that once this migration of Palestinians started, the Israeli authorities did little to stop it because they saw it as a quick way to solve the problem of Arab presence in a Jewish state.<sup>6</sup> David Ben-Gurion admitted, "in the matter of immigration that the law distinguished between Jews and non-Jews."<sup>7</sup> A policy to allow for discrimination in immigration would appear necessary to fulfill the Zionist goal of creating a Jewish state. Such discrimination may not appear racist, but further study shows that it is. First, Zionists have always regarded Jews as a race with identifiable characteristics deserving of nationhood. Therefore, non-Jews must belong to a different race. More practically, immigration practices provide better service and more favorable treatment to immigrants from the United States and Europe than to those from Asia and Africa. In order to attract

immigrants who will fit culturally into the Western-oriented Israeli society and who will bring needed skills, educational levels, and capital into the country, American and European (particularly Russian) immigrants are usually provided with better housing and jobs in more convenient and prosperous areas of the country.<sup>8</sup> An example of the policy in action is the distinction made between "northern" and "southern" French immigrants. In fact, the distinction is not based on place of birth or residence, but on racial heritage. "Northern" French are people of European origin who, upon immigration, are normally settled in urban areas. "Southern" French are those of North African origin, and they are usually sent to distant development towns where the quality of life is not as high.<sup>9</sup>

Immediately following the establishment of the state of Israel, Arabs already living in the country were made subject to a number of Emergency Regulations, including military governing of Arab dominated areas. During the mandate period, Jews complained of the injustice of the restrictive British policies. However, after gaining independence, the regulations were lifted only for Jews, while remaining in effect for Arabs.<sup>10</sup> Regulations were especially strict in areas close to borders or where there were suspicions of espionage or sabotage activities. Military governors were superimposed on the regular district administrators in Arab areas.<sup>11</sup> These governors could order house arrest, banishment, and administrative arrest without going to court.<sup>12</sup> They could also subject people to police supervision, deny them access to their own property, deport them, and confiscate or

destroy their property.<sup>13</sup> Gaining political and economic control over Israeli Arabs was easily accomplished through these regulations. Until 1973, many Arabs were required to have passes in order to move within the country.<sup>14</sup> Potential political leaders and suspected troublemakers could be controlled by placing them on a pass black-list. In addition, occupational opportunities were severely limited under such restrictions. A person's professional life, his relations with others, his entire livelihood could be controlled through the use of these regulations.

Military government also had a cultural impact by separate administration of the Arab sector with separate advisory offices for minorities. Arabs could get a feeling of only partial participation in such a system while the view of Arabs as a distinct and potentially dangerous part of the population could be reinforced. These regulations undoubtedly had impact on other areas such as occupation, education, social status, and political participation.

Military government and the pass system in Israel proper have been eliminated, but their meaning and impact should not be minimized. Although justified in the name of security, added results were to limit Arab opportunities at the crucial time of the state's establishment and to set the pattern for the future relationship between Jews and Arabs in Israel. Also, in the Israeli-occupied Arab territories, the same Emergency Regulations are presently employed.<sup>15</sup>

### Economics

Israeli economic policy has, since 1948, revolved around the following three principles: Socialism, protectionism, and dualism.

These were the result of conscious choices designed to fulfill the purposes of Zionism and to meet certain needs of the state. A Socialist economy was thought to be appropriate in the Zionist state where all Jewish people were to work together to achieve salvation and prosperity for their nation. Other reasons for choosing socialism were to attain a high degree of social justice among the population and to build a sense of community and national togetherness. Also, considering the importance of economic success to a newly created nation, the planning and control allowed in a publicly managed economy seemed necessary.

Towards these ends, the Israeli government plans and administers the nation's economy. It controls the flow of capital investment, deciding the locations and purposes for which it is to be used. Administrative regulations over wages and prices were extensive until the 1977 victory of Menahem Begin's Likud bloc, which is committed to moving Israel toward a more free enterprise economy. Government sponsored housing, agriculture, and industry are determining factors in economic development nationally and regionally.<sup>16</sup> Social and demographic conditions can be vitally affected by the government under an economic system of this type.

An especially important part of Israel's economy is the kibbutz, a cooperative agricultural settlement. These are the symbol of Israeli socialism, fostering the values of public service, cooperation, simplicity, egalitarianism and the dignity of labor.<sup>17</sup>

Kibbutzim are based on a communal life style but modern agricultural equipment and techniques are used. The government often prefers to settle new immigrants in kibbutzim to inculcate the values of this



pioneer ethic into them, as well as to strengthen the system and improve agricultural productivity.<sup>18</sup>

Immediately following independence, Israel instituted a policy of protecting its industry from foreign competition. Protection was necessary to create viable industrial and commercial sectors in the country. Complete reliance on imports could eventually damage the nation's security. Continuing that reliance could also lead to an imbalanced economy and massive trade deficits that could inhibit the growth of incomes, prevent substantial improvements in the standards of living, and generally slow economic development. So a protective policy was used to promote the replacement of imports with an eventual shift to exports.<sup>19</sup>

The principle of dualism had its beginning in the mandate period. Jews made a great effort to be economically independent and in doing this, excluded Arabs from participating in their sector. The Arabs were helped by British-created employment and public service and had their main economic connection with neighboring Arab states. During these years, Jewish immigration forced many Arab fellahin off the land. Trends established then showed that the eventual Jewish majority would create an isolated sector removed from the Arab economy and characterized by a growing disparity of economic level. After the creation of Israel, the government faced the task of administering a nation of both Jews and Arabs. But the dualist concept was maintained. This is not exactly separate development in the South African mold, but areas have been developed differently according to the type of inhabitants. Arab regions can be identified by their

economic structure. It is primarily agricultural and uses traditional techniques of production in sharp contrast to the more advanced and more rapidly expanding Jewish regions.<sup>20</sup>

A variety of strategies and plans have been employed to carry out these three principles. Israel has relied heavily upon the use of foreign capital. Total foreign capital has averaged about 15 to 20% of Israel's Gross National Product, the highest in the world. Between 1950 and 1960, foreign capital inflow was equal to total investment in the country, indicating the tremendous importance of foreign money to the Israeli economy.<sup>21</sup> From Israel's establishment to the present, U.S. aid to Israel has amounted to \$14.5 billion, with an additional \$4.3 billion in private contributions and \$2 billion worth of Israeli bonds in U.S. accounts.<sup>22</sup> Foreign money was absolutely necessary to stimulate and make possible the economic growth necessary for a small, newly created nation to improve the lives of its citizens, legitimize its authority, raise its world position, and provide for its security.

From 1948 to 1964, the Israeli government emphasized agricultural development.<sup>23</sup> This was done to promote Zionist values, to meet basic needs of the people, to provide necessary employment, and to ease the absorption process for immigrants, especially those from Africa and the Middle East. Industrial enterprises were gradually developed to reduce the importance of imports with plans for further expansion. Protection of the competitive position of these industries was provided in government policy. This proved to be a very successful period in Israel's

economic history. From 1950 to 1965, GNP rose by 11.4%, the highest in the non-Soviet world. During this time, Israel ranked between sixteenth and eighteenth in per capita GNP and became one of the world's thirty most affluent nations.<sup>24</sup> In 1964, a big balance of payments deficit led the government to plan a recession to slow inflation and reduce the deficit.<sup>25</sup>

After the 1967 war, Israel experienced an economic boom characterized by full employment with increased tourism, building construction, exports, and prosperity.<sup>26</sup> The country's GNP grew 25% from 1968 to 1969.<sup>27</sup> The 1968 government plan was designed to take advantage of these good conditions and reduce reliance on capital imports, reduce the trade deficit, and to attain economic independence. Doing this would require further economic growth and industrial expansion. Since this type of activity had normally been accomplished with foreign capital, it conflicted with the goal of economic independence. The clash between the desire for self-sufficiency and the necessity of outside assistance seems inherent in the Israeli economy.

Problems with these policies began to surface in 1971, when the consumer price index rose 25% while hourly wages increased only 12 to 15%. Again, a balance of payments deficit occurred and the government devalued the currency by 20% to make imports more expensive.<sup>28</sup>

However, the most damaging economic crisis came with the October War of 1973. In monetary terms, this war cost almost the equivalent of one year's GNP. Since then, Israel has been spending about 40%

of its budget and one third of its annual GNP on national defense.<sup>29</sup> This is compared to 6% of GNP spent by the U.S. on defense and 4 to 8% by most industrialized nations.<sup>30</sup> Loss of life and manpower have made the costs of the war and its consequences even higher. In addition, Israel has been unable to substantially reduce its reliance on outside assistance because of its defense posture. The defense burden also includes loss of production through reserve duty and the higher costs of border settlements that are established for security reasons without regard to economic feasibility. To combat this situation, the Israeli government took drastic measures. It passed an austerity budget, devalued the Israeli pound by 40%, reduced subsidies on foodstuffs, and raised taxes.<sup>31</sup> The results of these decisions were staggering. The consumer price index rose 60% in 1974. This was broken down for specific categorical increases as follows: foodstuffs increased 85%; gasoline 85%; natural gas 155%; electricity 117%; and water 115%.<sup>32</sup> These changes led to a rapid and drastic decline in Israeli living standards.

But the government continued to follow the same general direction. In October, 1975 policy decisions were made to further devalue the pound by 10%, increase consumer prices by 22%, and to adopt a new 10% sales tax.<sup>33</sup> By 1976, inflation was estimated to be moving at a 30% rate, while unemployment remained low at only 3%.<sup>34</sup> And in 1977, real disposable income was estimated to be 15% less than in 1973.<sup>35</sup> One apparent consequence of these conditions was a decline in immigration. 1975 statistics showed emigration (18500) nearly equal to immigration (20000). The figure of people

moving into Israel was down from 31970 in 1974 and 58886 in 1973.<sup>36</sup>

In this way, economics was damaging the effectiveness of the Israelis in achieving the central task of the Zionist state, the ingathering of the exiles. The centrality of defense in Israeli thinking and spending that has been obvious since the inception of the state is probably the single most important fact in causing these economic troubles.

With the election of the Likud government, Israel underwent substantial economic change. The new conservative leadership of the country was committed to moving Israel away from socialism into a free enterprise economy. Most government imposed economic controls were eliminated, the pound was floated on the world market, and most foreign currency regulations were dropped. Despite these changes, basic ideas on solving immediate problems remain similar. The new government imposed a 12% value added tax in 1977.<sup>37</sup> Again, the purpose was to make Israeli products less expensive internationally and to increase exports. Exports increased by 25% in 1978, but 20% of that was arms sales to Chile, South Africa, and Nicaragua.<sup>38</sup>

Begin's policies increased foreign investment in Israel by 58% in 1978.<sup>39</sup> These policies would also leave less money in the hands of Israelis as a way to decrease imports. However, the Begin government has not made any effort to reduce government spending on defense, welfare, or social services. In fact, since the Likud victory, public expenditures are up, the number of public employees is up, and wages have risen higher than productivity and inflation. Inflation ran at a 50% rate in 1978 and was near 100% in 1979. The



1978 Israeli budget was higher than national output, while the 1979 budget was only slightly less. The 1978 balance of payments deficit was one quarter of the nation's GNP for that year.<sup>40</sup>

Despite Israeli efforts to reduce its dependence on foreign capital, the amount flowing to it has been increasing. Of the \$14.5 billion in U.S. aid given to Israel, \$10 billion has come since 1973. The Camp David accords provide for \$2.8 billion per year in U.S. financial assistance, and will cause Israel to depend on the U.S. and Egypt for sufficient oil supplies to meet its needs.<sup>41</sup> So, neither the policies of the Labor governments or the Likud government have had major success in solving Israel's most pressing economic problems or in increasing its self-sufficiency.

There are consequences of Israeli economic policy that reveal more about the country's internal conditions, its purposes, and its nature. The economic situation and treatment of Arab residents in Israel and of Jews of Asian and African descent, known as Oriental Jews, are direct evidence as to the government's commitments and priorities. Information on the extent of poverty, income distribution, and possession of durable consumer goods is valuable in this analysis.

It is widely acknowledged that the economic differences between these groups is a problem Israel inherited and imported rather than created. The important issues are whether the Israeli government is committed to eliminating this gap and what progress has been achieved since the establishment of the state. Also important is to determine if economic conditions have been used to build and maintain

a dominant position within the state for European Jews. Zionists have continually claimed that they have improved living conditions for Arabs more than had the Arab leadership. However, this would not justify the possibility that Jewish advantages in technology, financial enterprises, and industrial establishments have contributed to making Arabs and other racial groups second-class citizens.

In income distribution, the Israeli record is a varied one. The annual income of Arab families in 1976 was about two thirds that of Jewish families, despite the fact that Arabs have more wage earners (and accordingly, more mouths to feed) per family.<sup>42</sup> A related statistic is that Arabs spend 60% of their income on food and shelter compared to 49% for Jews.

However, information about Israeli families native to the country, of European origin, and of Asian-African origin are more significant in determining income distribution along racial lines. In 1951, four years after establishment of Israel, Israelis of Asian-African origin earned about 61% of that earned by families of Western origin. By 1957, this figure was 47%. Also significant in that year, it was found that Israeli-born children of Eastern parents earned only 68% of that earned by Israeli-born children of European-American origin.<sup>43</sup> In 1960, the income of Asian-African families was 45% that of European-Americans, in 1963-64 it was 51%, and in 1970 it was 55%.<sup>44</sup> Important to consider in judging these figures is that the average Oriental family is larger than the average Western family. In 1968-69, the difference in family size was 4.7 for Orientals to 2.9 for Westerners.<sup>45</sup>

That made real Sephardi income only 44% that of Western family income. These figures seem to show a decline in relative income in the 1950's with a closing of the gap appearing in the 1960's.

The following table, based on information collected by the Horowitz Committee on Income Distribution and Social Inequality, under the auspices of the government of Israel, shows the change in income distribution over time.

Indices of Relative Income by Area of Origin \*<sup>46</sup>

| Continent of<br>Birth of Head<br>of Family | 1951  | 1954  | 1959-<br>1960 | 1963-<br>1964 | 1970 | 1973 |
|--|-------|-------|---------------|---------------|------|------|
| All Families                               | 100   | 100   | 100           | 100           | 100  | 100  |
| Asia-Africa                                | 88.8  | 76.2  | 75.7          | 63            | 69   | 70   |
| Europe-America                             | 101.2 | 107.9 | 112.1         | 124           | 126  |      |
| Israel                                     | 102.9 | 103.7 | 111.5         | 125           | 119  |      |

According to these figures, there has not been steady progress toward income equality in Israel. However, from 1963 to 1970, Asian-African families had a larger increase than other groups. This could indicate a trend toward more equality. The Horowitz Committee concluded that the standard of living of Oriental families improved in the 1960's with higher income, better housing, and possession of more consumer durables.<sup>47</sup> However, the relative position of Oriental families in the area of income seems to have declined overall since 1950 despite improvements in the 1960's. Also important to note is that of the 20% of Israel's population

\*Data for 1963-64 and 1970 reflect an adjustment for family size and are thus not directly comparable to data for previous years. Similar adjustments for earlier years would presumably have increased relative differentials to about the level of the later years.

that was below the poverty line in 1973, 90% were Orientals.<sup>48</sup>

Possession of durable consumer goods is another indicator of relative economic conditions. The following list presents information on this indicator for 1960 and 1970.<sup>49</sup>

| Product and Origin of Head<br>of Family | % of Families Possessing<br>Selected Product |             |
|---|--|-------------|
|   | <u>1960</u>                                  | <u>1970</u> |
| Electric Refrigerator                   |  |             |
| Asia-Africa                             | 17   | 92          |
| Europe-America                          | 69   | 97          |
| Gas Stove                               |  |             |
| Asia-Africa                             | 43   | 89          |
| Europe-America                          | 75   | 88          |
| Electric Washing Machine                |  |             |
| Asia-Africa                             | 8  | 46          |
| Europe-America                          | 21   | 42          |
| Television                              |  |             |
| Asia-Africa                             | 2  | 48          |
| Europe-America                          | 2  | 55          |
| Car                                     |  |             |
| Asia-Africa                             | 4  | 8           |
| Europe-America                          | 14   | 19          |

These figures clearly show that in the area of consumer goods, the position of Asian-African Israelis has markedly increased, virtually closing the gap completely. This occurrence, coupled with the increase in Oriental family incomes in the late 1960's, seems to support the Israeli claim that living standards have improved for citizens of Asian and African origin.

One factor in judging Israel's commitment to racial equality is the distribution of government aid to individuals and communities in Israel. Between 1948 and 1975, the Jewish Agency spent \$1.2 billion to develop Jewish settlements. Arab villages have no access to these funds and Israeli government aid to Arab villages has averaged

about \$1 million per year.<sup>50</sup> In 1971-72, the Arab sector received 1.1% of all grants to local authorities with no loans to cover deficits in local authorities' budgets and no money for repayment of deficits.<sup>51</sup> Nazareth Mayor Tawfig Zayad reported that his city, a major Arab center of 45000, received \$31 million in the 1976 Israeli budget, while the new Jewish settlement of Upper Nazareth, with a population of 16000, received over \$40 million.<sup>52</sup> In 1972, 43 of 105 Arab villages had electricity, with 20 more in the planning stages.<sup>53</sup> A study in the same year reported that 20 of 94 Arab villages sampled had acceptable levels of modernization.<sup>54</sup>

Major results of these unequal policies have been to create an unbalanced economy and to transform the nature of the Arab sector in the country. The study just cited and a report by Hebrew University in the same year both found that Arab villages were more developed under the British mandate than in present times. Both reports said that since 1948, the Arab region has declined as a producer.<sup>55</sup> Construction of factories, expansion of agricultural production, and development of local services in Arab areas have not increased, forcing many Arabs to leave their villages or farms to work in the Jewish sector.<sup>56</sup> This pattern of economic development supported by government expenditures has created an economy in which the Jewish sector is predominant in production and management while the Arab sector functions as a labor supply for Jewish enterprises. The Israeli government has taken the position that their development policy has stimulated aggregate investment, assuming that the effects of this would be beneficial to all regions. However, economist



Gunnar Myrdal rejected this theory in his 1957 work, Economic Theory on Underdeveloped Regions. He stated that unbalanced economic development produces even greater imbalances. Continued investment in more developed regions attracts labor and capital away from less developed regions, reducing their potential for development.<sup>57</sup> So, the impact of Israel's spending policy is much greater than simply the difference in regional expenditures. Fred M. Gottheil predicted in the early 1970's that present development policy would make the Arab region Israel's Appalachia, although increased incomes would give its inhabitants a higher standard of living.<sup>58</sup> It is possible that the economic fabric of the country has been transformed since the mass Jewish immigration to make the economic and social development of the settlers a direct function of the underdevelopment of the natives. Although the existence of Israel has brought increased wealth to the country's Arabs, it has served to put Jews in control of the economic structure and provide them with superior benefits.

Nowhere is this type of relationship more clear than in the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza, as described by Dutch economist Brian Van Arkadie. He explains that since the initial policy decisions were made to employ Arab labor from the territories in the Israeli economy, to open the territories to the inflow of Israeli products, and to allow the sale of selected territorial products in Israel following the 1967 war, economic relations with Israel have become the predominant ones for both areas. The West Bank and Gaza are affected by tariffs, exchange rate adjustments, and fiscal and monetary policies framed to meet Israel's

needs. Because Israel has exercised complete control over these policies with no participation in their shaping by either West Bank or Gaza inhabitants, there has been no possibility of modifying them to meet local needs. Control of these policy decisions allows Israel to determine production, consumption, and employment patterns in the two areas. Dominance of trade by Israel may cause the territories to lose opportunities to develop markets outside Israel. The combination of economic control and trade dominance could stunt the potential for economic growth in the territories and reinforce the existing structural imbalance.

It is true that West Bank and Gaza Palestinians working in Israel earn incomes substantially above what could be earned in the territories. However, these short-term economic gains do not eliminate the disadvantages involved in placing Palestinians in the specialized role of poor working class in Israeli society. Also, extensive withdrawal of labor from the territories creates problems for the local economies, with the possibility that the West Bank and Gaza could become dormitories for manual labor in the Israeli economy, intensifying the bias in the structure and in the skills of the Palestinian people.<sup>59</sup> Itzhak Ben-Aharon, former Secretary General of Israel's Histadrut labor union has said that, "Israel was building Zionism on the backs of hired labor from the occupied territory."<sup>60</sup> There is a danger that this imbalance could concentrate Palestinian workers at the lower end of the wage scale without the same possibilities for growth as in recent years.<sup>61</sup> The description of economic development in the occupied territories shows how the government of

Israel has used its powers to place Jews in a superior position to Arabs, both in terms of economic well-being and economic power. Moshe Sharett, who served as Foreign Minister under Ben-Gurion, went as far as to say in 1957 that Israel had tried to buy the national birthright of the Arabs with economic and social progress.<sup>62</sup>

But the economic and social progress of Israel's Arabs does not seem to be equal to that of Jews and it appears that its price may have included more than their national birthright. This is shown in the occupational distribution of Israel's workers and in the government's labor policies.

During the early Jewish immigration to Palestine from the 1880's to about 1913, the Jewish sector of the economy was based primarily on hired Arab labor.<sup>63</sup> Near the end of that period, a movement emphasizing self-reliance among Jews emerged and became dominant. This feeling manifested itself in many ways, including the exclusive use of the Hebrew language and the development of strictly Jewish defense mechanisms. Another result of that trend was the practice of using only Jewish labor within the Jewish economic sectors.<sup>64</sup> According to Knesset member and newspaper editor Uri Avnery, the struggle for Hebrew labor was the real beginning of the Arab-Israeli war.<sup>65</sup> Hebrew labor meant, necessarily, no Arab labor. To many of this movement's supporters, strikes and violence were justified to force employers to hire only Jews.

Hebrew labor, more than anything else, created the gulf between the two peoples living in British and Turkish Palestine. The development of two separate economies was a major step toward the

development of two nations. Reduced economic relations meant greatly reduced social contact between Arabs and Jewish immigrants. The implementation of the Hebrew labor principle was strong evidence to Palestinian Arabs that the Jews had not come to Palestine to live with them, but had come to displace them.

After the establishment of Israel, the Hebrew labor policy was continued. The Jewish National Fund stipulates that on land it owns, "It shall be a matter of principle that Jewish labor be employed."<sup>66</sup> This is extremely important when considering that the JNF owns 90% of the inhabited area in Israel.<sup>67</sup> The extremely close ties of the Histadrut to the ruling Labor party made Arab exclusion even more significant. A decision to allow Arabs into the Histadrut with equal rights was a legal departure from Hebrew labor ideas, but did not lead to a major change in Israeli occupational distribution. In 1966, the label "Jewish workers" was officially dropped from the full title of the Histadrut.<sup>69</sup> This marked the end of the Hebrew labor policy as it had originally been defined.

In present day Israel, Arabs are no longer excluded from participation in the Jewish economy but are concentrated at the lower end of that economy. JNF regulations prohibit non-Jews from opening businesses on their land.<sup>70</sup> In Upper Nazareth where the JNF has acquired land and developed industries, the businesses are all Jewish owned, although the area is inhabited by a majority of Arabs. Arabs have been employed in Upper Nazareth factories in primarily menial jobs.<sup>71</sup> In fact, over half of Israel's Arabs are employed outside the Arab region.<sup>72</sup> Also, Israel's Arab workers make up over

half of the unskilled and semi-skilled in the country while being only 9.8% of the work force. In 1944, before the creation of Israel, Arabs were 33% of those employed in the commercial, banking, public service, and personal services sectors. By 1968, this had dwindled to 17.1%.<sup>73</sup> Arabs have also experienced a decline in agricultural employment. Arab population growth, the founding of new Jewish rural communities, and Arab use of traditional farming methods have resulted in a shift of Arabs out of agriculture. Farm employment of Arabs decreased from 50% in 1950 to 31.5% in 1969.<sup>74</sup> The labor surplus this created contributed to the phenomenon of thousands of landless Arab workers who work in the cities, living in shanty towns during the week, and traveling home by bus on weekends.<sup>75</sup> Many Israeli employers consider Arab workers to be a bonus because they have high productivity, can be easily dismissed, make no demands, and are more willing to accept industrial jobs than are Jewish workers.<sup>76</sup> An example of employers' perceptions of Arab workers is this excerpt from a circular distributed in the Gaza Strip published in the newspaper Haolam Hazeh: "Fixed Prices: One Hour's Labor - 12.50 Israel Pounds, One Hour's Arab Labor - 5.0 Israel Pounds."

Again, the more important issue to understand is the distribution of Israeli workers along racial rather than religious lines. Native Israelis and citizens of European-American origin make up a decisive majority and are represented far above the national average in academic, scientific, executive, administrative, and clerical positions. People with Asian-African origins are employed in these professions



lower than the national average. The opposite is true for positions of semi-professional skills and manual labor.<sup>77</sup> In 1969, more than half of all Asian-African workers were employed as industrial or service workers, compared to one third of European-American and native Israelis. 17% of the Asian-Africans had jobs in the high paying scientific, technical, administrative, executive, managerial, and clerical professions. This compares to 38% for European-Americans and 44% for native Israelis.<sup>78</sup>

Workers of Asian and African origin constitute 34% of Israel's work force. Yet they make up 53% of construction workers, 41% of industrial workers, and 48% of those in service jobs. They are heavily concentrated in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs, low in prestige and payment. They represent only 16% of the professional work force and 19% of the total white collar employment. They hold just 1.2% of government positions although 40% of all government workers do not have higher education.<sup>79</sup>

Yoram Ben-Porath attributes the occupational imbalance to the following causes: differences in imported characteristics of European-American and Asian-African immigrants to Israel; differences in initial job allocation upon immigration; differences in learning and mobility processes over time in Israel.<sup>80</sup> Although Israeli policy cannot be blamed for differences in imported characteristics, the other two phenomena are within the scope of government policy decisions. Initial employment allocation of immigrants has been and continues to be strongly affected by Israel's absorption policies. Geographic placement of immigrants by the government is a

determining factor in the employment opportunities available for the immigrants. Also, assistance from the government and political parties to immigrants in finding employment is often an essential part of the job placement process.

Learning and mobility processes in any country are greatly affected by the entire spectrum of government social policies. Welfare, housing, education, health, affirmative action, public employment, and other government policies are all related to employment patterns and opportunities. In Israel's socialist oriented economy where there are such strong relationships between the government, political parties, and economic organizations like the Histadrut and the Jewish National Fund, the government's ability to affect employment and occupational distribution is more pronounced. In Israel, there is no equality in occupational distribution along religious or racial lines and no sign of a trend toward equality. This cannot be totally blamed on differing characteristics of the racial groups involved. Israeli government policy must, in large measure, be held responsible for employment inequality and for contributing to racism.

#### Land and Residence Policies

Policies and practices relating to residence, land use, and land ownership also indicate Israel's character. These policies began with the Emergency Regulations discussed previously. The military administration of Arab regions allowed the government to determine the area of residence for Arabs, control their movement, and confiscate their land and property.<sup>81</sup> The Land Acquisition Law gives the Israeli government power to take over land that is declared abandoned

or whose owner is declared absentee.<sup>82</sup> The use of the Emergency Regulations and the Land Acquisition Law gave the government much power in converting land to its control after the state was established. Another important tool in this effort was the Law of Prescription, passed in 1958. This law required anyone claiming ownership of land to prove continuous possession of the land for 15 years or forfeit it to the government. This was often impossible for many people since no land was registered during the British Mandate, which had ended twelve years earlier.<sup>83</sup>

In addition to Israel's confiscation of private land, residence and the use of land are also controlled in a discriminatory fashion. According to Israel Shahak, a professor at Hebrew University and a member of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, the towns of Carmel, Upper Nazareth, Hatzon, Arad, and Mitzpeh-Roman prohibit non-Jews from living there by law. As discussed earlier, the Jewish National Fund denies to non-Jews the right to acquire housing or open a business on their land. The situation in Upper Nazareth was cited to explain one effect of these practices. But the joint implementation of labor and land policies in Upper Nazareth is only part of a consciously designed government plan to achieve a major Zionist goal. In order to continue progress toward totally transforming Palestine into a Jewish state, the Israeli government introduced the "Judaization of Galilee" program in 1975. Galilee is the major Arab region in Israel and includes Nazareth, the largest Arab city with a population of 45000. The purpose of the Judaization of Galilee was to change the demographic composition in the area into Jewish majority.

So, the government invested heavily in business, housing, and recreational development to attract Jews to the area. But a concomitant occurrence has been to deprive the Arab majority of some of their land and of equal rights to ownership, employment, and residence on land controlled by Jews. Arab land was expropriated in various ways by the JNF to accommodate Jewish development and Arabs cannot own businesses or live on that land. This program, which is still being implemented, illustrates how Israel's commitment to increasing the Jewishness of the state means violating the rights of non-Jews.

### Education

An essential basis for improving the position of any group within a given society is equal education. The commitment of the Israeli government to providing such education to Arabs and Oriental Jews is then, a crucial test of the state's intentions. In regard to the Arab population, Israel has failed that test. In 1975, Arabs were 15% of Israel's population. At the elementary school level, Arabs made up 20% of all school children. By secondary school, this figure drops to 7.7% and then to 2% at sub-university institutions. In Israeli universities, Arabs amount to only 1.8% of the student population.<sup>84</sup> Also, only 6.3% of financial assistance to university students goes to Arabs, and 0.2% of students receiving aid are Arabs.<sup>85</sup> David Ben-Gurion offered the typical Israeli explanation for such differences when he stated that Arab education had not reached the Jewish level because the Arab population and authorities had not shown the same interest in fostering education and in taking on the

necessary financial burdens.<sup>86</sup> It is pointed out that every recognized Arab settlement has a school building<sup>87</sup> and that all Arab children between the ages of 5 and 14 go to state primary schools where Arabic is used.<sup>88</sup> While it is true the Israelis have made efforts to improve Arab education, their success in providing equal education cannot be demonstrated statistically. Also, the lower income and larger family size of Arab households prohibits them from undertaking the financial burdens Ben-Gurion claimed to be necessary.

Another important factor is that the educational system is biased against Arab students, making progress difficult. Arab children must attend the state secular schools while Jewish children have the option of attending the secular or religious schools, all state supported.<sup>89</sup> Israeli high school is incredibly difficult, with each student taking about 14 subjects, going to school six days a week, and preparing four to five hours of homework each day.<sup>90</sup> Few children from underprivileged backgrounds could be reasonably expected to do well under such a system. The curriculum in Israeli schools also favors Jewish students. Six times as many hours are spent studying the Bible as the Koran.<sup>91</sup> An Arab child studies Arabic, Hebrew, and English in that order. A Jewish child studies Hebrew, English, and is then given a choice of Arabic or French.<sup>92</sup> Actually, only 4% of Israeli university students have Arabic as second language.<sup>93</sup> This has created a language barrier within the educational system. Arabs claim that their schools must teach Zionism from a Jewish perspective, that Arab children learn their history through a negative perspective



and that school books are biased in favor of the Jewish position on political issues.<sup>94</sup> There is also the claim that Arab school facilities and teachers are inferior. For example, in Arab schools the average pupil/teacher ratio is 31 to 1, while in Jewish schools it is 25 to 1.<sup>95</sup> Also, half the teachers in Arab regions of Israel are untrained compared to 16% in Jewish regions.<sup>96</sup>

In addition to inequalities in the education system, another factor must be considered. Ben-Gurion was at least partially correct when he stated that Arab families were less interested in education than Jewish ones. A major reason is that the achievement of a complete education by Arabs is not often seen to be worthwhile economically. An Arab with education equivalent to a Jew cannot compete equally in the Jewish controlled economic sector or in government because of cultural, linguistic, and social differences, even without considering discrimination. An Arab youth may not complete his education because he must get a job to help his economically disadvantaged family or because the limited economic benefits he may derive from education are not worth the struggle through the biased and unequal education system. It can be seen that in Israel, there has been created a cycle of discrimination in education, employment, and standard of living that forces Arabs into the role of second-class citizens within the Jewish state.

Not only Arabs, but Oriental Jews also suffer under this discrimination. The Compulsory Education Act of 1949 provided for free and compulsory education for all children 5 to 13. Tuition was charged for secondary schools which were not compulsory.<sup>97</sup> This

made secondary school attendance difficult for Orientals, considering their lower incomes and larger families, even though some tuition grants were available. The examination system also creates problems for disadvantaged children. At 14, a nationwide exam is given, success on which entitles students to benefit from the tuition grants. Those who go on to complete secondary school must take a matriculation exam at age 17 to qualify for higher education.<sup>98</sup> The system is a very selective one in which only the most qualified students can succeed. Those not passing the qualifying exam for secondary school can go on to a vocational or agricultural school. However, the academic secondary school is the main avenue to white collar occupations while the vocational schools tend to prepare children for lower occupational levels.<sup>99</sup> In 1957-58, 43% of the students from European and American backgrounds attained the highest level on the secondary school exam, 30.4% of the Israeli-born did, and 16.8% of Asian and African students did. 63% of the Asian-African students fell into the lowest category.<sup>100</sup>

Recognizing these problems, the Israeli government instituted many reforms in the early 1960's designed to improve education for Oriental Jews. These included subsidizing nursery programs, lowering the compulsory age for kindergarten children from low income families, extending the school day for low income children, establishing seventy special classes to help children with difficulties due to psychological-social background, developing a special program of aid and scholarships through the Jewish Agency, increasing extracurricular activities in slum areas, providing selective

intensive aid to children of low socio-economic status or in remote areas, setting up 16 boarding schools to mitigate the effects of an unsupportive home environment, lowering standards for Oriental students to increase their eligibility for state aid in post-primary education, and grouping for particular subjects while maintaining the class as a social unit.<sup>101</sup>

The net effect of these reforms has been limited. For example, in 1966, after the reforms, 75% of students with Western parents passed the secondary schools' placement test while two thirds of Oriental students failed it.<sup>102</sup> Between 1963 and 1970, the percentage of 14 to 17 year old students of Asian-African origins increased from 27% to 44% while the corresponding rate for European-American went from 60% to 76% showing that the gap was not substantially decreased during that time.<sup>103</sup> Oriental Jews make up 84% of Israeli citizens who are illiterate.<sup>104</sup> In 1975, Oriental Jewish children made up 63% of all children entering kindergarten. At the eighth grade level they constituted 42% of the student population and were 28% of those that graduated from 12th grade. Orientals were about 19% of those that entered universities, and made up 7% of students receiving bachelors degrees, 5% of those earning masters degrees, and only 3% of the doctorate degree recipients.

The Israelis explain these continuing differences by lack of motivation, intellectual inferiority, an Oriental preference to purchase consumer goods rather than pay for education, and a lack of community leadership and commitment. They also claim that budget problems, teacher shortages, and lack of adequate facilities have

slowed implementation of the reforms.<sup>106</sup> However, the Oriental Jews face the same problems in dealing with the education system as do Arabs. The lower income and higher housing overcrowding among Orientals contribute greatly to educational difficulties.<sup>107</sup> The schools in development towns and slum areas inhabited by Oriental families are inferior to schools in the established towns and suburbs.<sup>108</sup> The curriculum is heavily slanted toward Europeans and teachers are predominantly of Western origin. In secondary schools, 75% of all teachers are Western<sup>109</sup> and in the universities, 99% are Western.<sup>110</sup> The highly selective nature of the education system, the expenses involved, and the Western domination of it discriminate against both lower income people and those from Eastern cultures. Reforms in education policy have not really improved the relative situation of Oriental Jews in Israel. This cannot be completely explained by the social and cultural inadequacies of the Orientals. Inequality in income and occupations contribute to this condition. Students from Asia and Africa have succeeded in other countries, so there is no inherent reason why they cannot succeed in Israel. For instance, there are 15000 North African Jews on the faculties of schools in France. In Israel, there are fewer North African Jewish students in the universities.<sup>111</sup> The statistics and the type of system in place both indicate the existence of discrimination in education on the basis of race, since it affects both Arabs and Jews of Asian-African origin.

#### Political Representation

One consequence of the educational and economic inferiority of

both Israeli Arabs and Oriental Jews, according to Seymour Martin Lipset, is an inability to politically organize around their needs and interests.<sup>112</sup> This is especially critical, since Lipset realized that political participation and power are the only ways to bring about changes in the stratification of Israeli society.<sup>113</sup>

It is correct that Israeli Arabs and Oriental Jews have not organized effectively within the Israeli political framework, and are not equally represented in the government. The small number of Arabs and Oriental Jews holding government employment has already been cited. The situation regarding elected positions is similar. In 1976, Arabs had six seats in the Knesset and no Cabinet ministers.<sup>114</sup> A correct proportion according to their weight in the population would have been 18 Knesset members and 3 ministers. In fact, no Arab has ever held a Cabinet position in Israel.<sup>115</sup> Also, Arabs are not nominated to serve on the Knesset standing committee on defense and foreign affairs.<sup>116</sup>

The position of Oriental Jews in the Israeli political system is not much better. They participate in politics about as much as European Jews but receive less for their efforts.<sup>117</sup> Orientals make up 13% of the Knesset membership although they represent 60% of the population.<sup>118</sup> Leonard Fein has concluded that Jews of Eastern origin have never been effectively incorporated into the system, primarily because Westerners have a monopoly on the positions of leadership.<sup>119</sup>

It is not simply educational and economic inferiority that has created this situation. Jews in Palestine were better prepared for



self-government than Arabs through the training they received under the British mandate. Jews were allowed to set up a Community Government which was given authority over the Jewish community's internal affairs. The system consisted of an elected Assembly, serving as the legislature; a National Council, which acted between Assembly sessions; and an Executive Council which performed administration for the Community Government. Over 20 political parties participated in the four Community Government elections under the mandate, establishing the tradition of proportional representation before the existence of Israel. Also, the Community Government was granted the power to tax in 1927, enabling it to carry out public services and social programs.<sup>120</sup> Arabs were allowed no such institution during the mandate years. This gave the Jews a great advantage, having control over a quasi-governmental institution at the time Israel was created.

The type of political system and actions of political parties also serve to restrict the political opportunities of Arabs and Oriental Jews. In Israel's proportional representation system, political parties are the only vehicle to elective office. Jewish parties, dominated by Europeans, were in a superior position in Israel's early years due to their mandate experience and because of the use of Emergency Regulations to restrict the activities of Arab political leaders. Established Israeli political parties also act as social agencies in assisting their members to obtain housing, employment, and other services. Parties use this power along with distributing their own newspapers and adjusting their positions on issues to attract ethnic groups to their ranks. These advantages

and powers have contributed to the fact that there is no party primarily oriented toward the interests of Oriental Jews. There is also no independent Arab party in Israel.<sup>121</sup> About 50% of the Oriental population is affiliated with the Labor Party, 30% with the ruling Likud bloc, and the rest divided among smaller parties. In this situation, Arabs and Orientals must vote for candidates chosen by the established political parties which are not closely aligned with their interests and do not often choose candidates of their race. Even when Arabs or Orientals are elected to the Knesset, the parliamentary system forces them to follow the positions of their party. Since all the major parties except the Communists are dominated by Europeans and strongly committed to Zionist ideals, it is unlikely that an Arab or an Oriental or a person expressing radical ideas could rise to a high party position. With the Zionist principle of the Jewish state dominating politics in Israel, it is not clear if an Arab should be allowed an important government position, and the Israeli government has not tested that question yet. In essence, the governmental system has made it very difficult for Arabs and Oriental Jews to form political parties of their own, and within the established Zionist parties, they are co-opted into instrumental participation without real influence in decision making.

Israel and its supporters have countered such arguments by claiming that the proportional representation system takes longer to respond to changes in the electorate's composition, but that Arab and Oriental participation in local government is an indication of coming change. For example, in 1948 there was only one non-Jewish

local council. By 1968, there were 45 Arab and Druze local councils, 48 self-governing Bedouin tribes. 75% of the non-Jewish population lived under its own local government compared to 27% before 1948. Also, the number of Orientals among Jewish members of local government councils increased from 15% in 1950 to 44% in 1967.<sup>122</sup> These figures represent significant gains for Israeli ethnic groups in local government. However, Israel's centralized government and proportional representation system limit the effect of these gains. Since the national government controls public spending and administers social programs, local government is not in a position to exercise significant powers. Also, the proportional representation system allows parties rather than geographic areas to choose national representatives. Participation and achievement in local government are not as effective a vehicle for obtaining national office under the proportional representation system as they are in a federal system. The increased representation of Arabs and Oriental Jews in local government does not necessarily mean they have or will have increased influence on policy making or administration. Again, it probably serves to co-opt them into the existing system and reduce their demands for change.

Political representation seems to follow the discriminatory pattern visible in nearly all areas of Israeli life. The system inhibits meaningful participation of Arabs and Oriental Jews by the advantages that exist for European Jews. This pattern cannot be a simple coincidence. The policies of the state of Israel are consciously designed to follow the ideas inherent in Zionist ideology

and have resulted in the creation of racist institutions.

### Culture and Public Attitudes

Underlying this institutional discrimination is the belief in the cultural inferiority of both Arabs and Oriental Jews. Zionist attitudes toward Arabs are typical of those felt by all colonial powers toward the native population. The European immigrants that formed the state of Israel have always considered themselves part of the Western world and established institutions and social structures based on Western values. The economic success of the Zionists in Israel made them feel they had achieved progress and brought benefits to the area that the existing Arab population was incapable of. When the Arabs found themselves a minority in a society vastly different than their traditional way of life, they did not adjust quickly or easily. The inherent racial bias in the institutions and structure of Israeli society discussed previously contributed greatly to Arab problems. Combining these attitudes and occurrences has allowed Israel to create a myth of Arab inferiority and to dehumanize their culture. Negative stereotypes regarding Arabs have been internalized by Israeli society. For instance, the expression "Arab's work" is a common derogatory statement in Israel describing incompetence or lack of skill in the performance of tasks.<sup>123</sup> A 1971 survey by Yochanan Peres showed that 80% of the sample of Israeli Jews agreed that "Arabs will not reach the level of progress of Jews." 90% preferred to see fewer Arabs in Israel and 90% agreed that "Arabs understand only force."<sup>124</sup> Opinion polls by Louis Harris and local organizations continually show that the majority of Israeli Jews regard

Arabs as inferior people.<sup>125</sup> The components of the social system reinforce these negative feelings by preventing Arabs from gaining access to the good things in the society while giving dominant Jews an ideological defense for their assumed superiority.

A statement by Israeli Jew Vitold Yadlitzky explains much about this relationship. He said,

I am a Polish Jew and a former Nazi prisoner. I went through some of the worst experiences of the Holocaust. My quite salient memory of those times is the memory of popular anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe. Some typical expressions of this popular anti-Semitism were, for instance, the stories of Jewish mentality, expressions, such as, 'the Jew understands only the language of money,' or 'the Jew understands only the language of force,' or 'the Jew is the fellow you cannot trust.' All these things I hear again and again in this country, with the exception that this is not in Polish but in Hebrew, and instead of the word 'Jew', the word 'Arab' appears.<sup>126</sup>

There are several current manifestations of the Jewish attitude of superiority toward Arabs other than opinion polls. For example, there is no civil marriage or divorce in Israel.<sup>127</sup> Allowing only religious marriage means that a Jew cannot marry a non-Jew, prohibiting Arabs from joining the mainstream of society through marriage. The establishment of the Ministry of Minorities and of Arab departments in all government agencies has tended to strengthen the Arab feeling that they are somehow different than Jews.<sup>128</sup> Also, Arabs are not allowed to serve in the Israeli Army because they are not trusted to be loyal.<sup>129</sup> This combined with memories of the military



government, further adds to the separation of Jewish from Arab culture in Israel. Government policy and public attitudes have inevitably become a self-fulfilling prophecy by doing little or nothing to foster a positive Arab orientation toward Israel. In fact, they have created hostility among Arabs toward Jewish society because it regards them as strange and rejects them from a major role in the society. The feelings of envy and inferiority among Arabs result from their lower economic status and from what is considered to be a lower cultural status. This is especially dangerous considering the former majority position of the Arabs in what is now Israel. Zionist ideology and Israeli government policy are major factors in deteriorating the relationship between Jews and Arabs in Israel.

However, this relationship has not developed merely along religious lines, but also along racial lines. Oriental Jews are also viewed as inferior by those of European-American origin. Uri Avneri, newspaper editor and former Knesset member, has written that the inferiority of Oriental Jews is a familiar attitude in Israeli conversation.<sup>130</sup> American anthropologist Raphael Patai summarized the feelings of Western Israelis toward Oriental Jews in this way:

In addition to instability, emotionalism, impulsiveness, unreliability and incompetence, the Oriental Jew is accused by European born Israelis of habitual lying and cheating, laziness, uncontrolled temper, superstitiousness, childishness, lack of cleanliness and in general 'primitivity' and 'lack of culture.'<sup>131</sup>

The term "cushi" is often applied to Oriental Jews in much the same

way "nigger" is used in the United States.<sup>132</sup> Since the society is dominated by the values and customs of the Western world, the traditions of the Oriental Jews are viewed as strange. This even affects religious rituals. The rituals practiced by Western Jews are considered by the government to be the official and proper ones, while those practiced by Orientals are considered deviations that the government allows to take place under the principle of religious freedom.<sup>133</sup> Golda Meir once said that, "Anyone who doesn't speak Yiddish (the traditional dialect of European Jews) is not a complete or perfect Jew."<sup>134</sup> This means that in the opinion of a former Prime Minister that at least 60% of Israel's population cannot be considered "complete or perfect Jews".

One result of this attitude is the attempt to absorb Oriental Jews into the society through assimilation. Patai and others have stated that a major aim of Israeli absorption policy is to completely reeducate Orientals to shape their social life along the lines of the existing values and institutions in the European image.<sup>135</sup> One reason for this is to minimize potentially disruptive effects caused by the mixing of cultures. The fact that Orientals outnumber the Europeans constitutes a threat to the cultural foundations established by the Zionists. This policy has been fairly successful according to Patai. The Orientals have given up traditional cultural practices such as polygamy, child marriage, female illiteracy, itinerant peddling, and traditional handicrafts. The patriarchal, extended family concept is on the way out and fertility is being controlled more than in the past. The use of old costumes, utensils,

folk medicines, amulets, and folk arts have virtually disappeared. Western forms have replaced the traditional features of Oriental culture.<sup>136</sup>

However, some have claimed there is more to the reeducation of the Oriental Jews than just to stabilize the society and eliminate outmoded practices. It can be interpreted as part of the overall scheme to place and maintain Western Jews in a position of superiority within Israel. Remodeling the Oriental Jews to conform to the society shaped by the early Zionists perpetuates the institutions and values that were created for and function to the benefit of Western Jews. It is ironic that the early Zionists considered assimilation into existing societies as an unacceptable alternative because it would not provide equal opportunities for Jews and would destroy their culture. Yet this same unacceptable policy is now being used by Israel in its treatment of Oriental Jews. The result has been exactly what the early Zionists predicted. Oriental Jews have not gained equal opportunities in any area of Israeli society and their culture has been radically changed. This has caused much resentment among Orientals who have conformed to the dominant group as they were expected to but have not been able to derive benefits accordingly. Now, the objective factors of inequality are continuing to forge an ethnic identity in Israel that the absorption policy sought to eliminate.

In every aspect of Israeli society, racial discrimination exists. Arabs and Oriental Jews are in an inferior position to Jews of Western origin. The policies and practices of the Israeli government and

other major institutions have not worked to address these racial differences and move toward equality. Present racial inequalities cannot be sufficiently explained by initial differences in the characteristics of the racial groups in the society.

The intention of Zionism was always to create a state under Jewish control and the movement was always dominated by European people who negotiated and fought with European nations to implement that plan. The policies of the government of Israel have been designed, in the most part, to protect and maintain the Jewishness of the state and to continue and enhance its connection to the Western world. The result has been that non-Jews and non-Westerners, who usually face an initial competitive disadvantage because of their backgrounds, are necessarily relegated to second class citizen status in order that the aims of Zionism be carried out. Israeli ideology and policy work consciously to insure that to be a Jew from Europe or America is ipso facto to be a member of a more prestigious group than others in the society. This is the true implementation of Zionism and serves to protect the position of the existing dominating elite.

#### Early Zionist Land Gains

In order for the Zionists to achieve the goal of establishing a Jewish state, it was, of course, necessary for them to acquire land. This became especially essential when mass immigration to Palestine began. In 1900, it is estimated that 50,000 Jews lived in Palestine. By 1918, the figure rose to 70,000 and by 1939, to almost half a million, which accounted for 30% of the population of Palestine. This

percentage remained stable up to the time of Israel's establishment.<sup>137</sup> To obtain the land necessary to accommodate them, Jews used a variety of means. The most common method was to purchase land from large landowners, many of them absentee owners, and then evicting the resident farmers. To this end, the Jewish National Fund was established. It purchased its first land in 1905.<sup>138</sup>

During the British mandate period, the number of Jewish villages increased from under 50 to over 250.<sup>139</sup> However, by 1947, Jews owned only 6.6% of the total land area in Palestine.<sup>140</sup> This amount was not sufficient to furnish all Jews in Palestine with the kind of independence and self-sufficiency envisioned by the Zionists. But a 1917 document indicates that the Zionists were interested in more than a homeland to provide self-sufficiency for Jews. The "Outline of the Program of Jewish Resettlement of Palestine in Accordance with the Aspirations of the Zionist Movement" submitted to the British government said, "The suzerain government shall sanction a formation of a Jewish company for the colonization of Palestine for the Jews."<sup>141</sup> The fact that the Zionist movement was supported by the British, through the Balfour Declaration, made Arabs fear colonization even more. Chaim Weizmann admitted that the Zionists sought English aid because they were "superior colonizers."<sup>142</sup> Uri Avnery stated that "Zionism was essentially a colonizing movement."<sup>143</sup>

One indication of Zionist intentions and attitudes is that acquisition of land in Palestine by Jews has always been described as "redeeming" or "liberating" the land. The implications of these



terms were humiliating to the Arabs and increased their suspicions regarding Zionist intentions. Prior to Israel's creation, Zionist claims used to justify Jewish immigration to Palestine and the eventual development of a homeland there were typical of other colonial powers. When Arabs protested the increasing Jewish presence in Palestine, the Zionists responded by saying that they were bringing civilization to the land, that the natives had neglected the land, that discriminatory acts were only temporary until equality could realistically be established, that the natives were not interested in politics, and that native unrest was artificially agitated.<sup>144</sup>

The pattern of mass immigration, support of a Western power, acquisition of land, and justification of actions seen in the Jewish movement to Palestine is typical of most colonial movements and set the basis for the type of state Israel was to be.

#### Expansion and Consolidation of Zionist Control, 1947-1967

On November 27, 1947, the United Nations resolved to partition Palestine into two states, one Jewish, one Arab. The Jewish were allocated 14,920 square kilometers and the Arab state, 11,000 square kilometers.<sup>145</sup> It is evidence of the remarkable political power of the Zionists that they were allocated such a large share of Palestine when Jews comprised only 30% of the population and owned only 6.6% of its land. The Jews accepted the UN resolution but the Arabs did not, and the result was military confrontation. The war afforded the Zionists an opportunity to gain land that they had been unable to acquire through purchase. David Ben-Gurion claimed that

Arab opposition to the UN resolution partitioning Palestine eliminated Israeli obligations to stay within the borders set in the resolution.<sup>146</sup> In fact, Israel did not, adding 2500 square miles of territory to that assigned by the UN to the Jewish state. Also, Jordan acquired 2200 square miles and Egypt obtained the Gaza strip as a result of the fighting. Over one million Arabs were displaced by the war with 450,000 incorporated into Jordan, 150,000 remaining in Israel, and 600,000 becoming refugees. Of the refugees, 56% went to Jordan, 11% to Syria, 11% to Lebanon, and 22% to Gaza.<sup>147</sup>

As discussed in Chapter 1, Israel has continually claimed that it is not responsible for the Arab displacement. However, it appears that in the process of expanding the area under Zionist control, the Israelis took deliberate actions designed to remove Arabs in order to clear the way for Jewish settlement. The massacre at Deir Yassin, also noted in Chapter 1, is one example of such actions. Later in 1948, similar incidents took place at the villages of Ramle and Lydda. However, these cases were slightly different in that instead of being carried out by a radical splinter group such as Begin's Irgun, these were conducted by official Israeli forces of the Haganah. In fact, the forces involved were under the general supervision of Yigal Allon, with Moshe Dayan in direct command. In both cases, Dayan's forces attacked by driving directly into city streets. The panic and terror caused by such tactics led to the departure of all villagers from the area.<sup>148</sup> Nathan Choshi, an Israeli pioneer, said in Jewish Newsletter in 1959 that,

We old Jewish settlers in Palestine  
who witnessed the flight could tell

him how and in what manner we Jews forced the Arabs to leave cities and villages,... some of them were driven out by force; others were made to leave by deceit, lying, and false promises. It is enough to cite the cities of Jaffa, Lydda, Ramle, Beersheba, Acre, from among numberless others."<sup>149</sup>

Zionist intentions and actions during the Arab-Israeli war of 1948-49 were consciously designed and carried out to expand the area under their control and reduce the number of Arabs in that area.

Following Israel's defeat of Arab forces and the establishment of the state, it embarked on a plan to increase Jewish control of land within its boundaries. A series of government action and legislation combined to form a policy of land expropriation that transferred much of the land owned by Arabs to Jewish ownership.

In 1948, Israel started setting up machinery to deal with unoccupied land by appointing a general custodian of absentee property. In 1950, the Knesset established a development authority. The Development Authority Law stipulated that the Authority could release property under its control only to the State, to agencies representing Arab refugees within Israel, or to local governments, with the condition that it first be offered for sale to the Jewish National Fund. In 1953, the general custodian of absentee property turned over all land under his control to the development authority. Much of this land, along with some "state land" was then sold to the JNF. State land was land seized by Israel that was considered not to belong to anyone. Later, all state land and JNF land was declared to be national land. This completed a complicated process by which about 92% of the total area of Israel has come to be owned by

the government and the JNF. A United Nations Commission estimated that over four million dunums of Israeli land was originally the property of Palestinian refugees, although there is not enough detailed information to make an exact estimate.<sup>150</sup> Another indication as to the extent of Israeli land acquisitions is that of the 803 Arab villages in Palestine in 1945, only 104 existed in 1971. Also, 350 of 370 new Jewish settlements established from 1948 to 1953 were on absentee property.<sup>151</sup>

All of this land was not acquired by taking control of abandoned areas. Israel devised and implemented a legislative program that enabled the government to expropriate Arab land. The Absentee's Property Law of 1950 transferred the property of absentees to the custodian mentioned earlier. The significance of the law is in the following definition of "absentee:" A person who, at any time during the period between...November 29, 1947, and the day on which a declaration is published...that the state of emergency declared by the Provisional State Council...on May 19, 1948 has ceased to exist (the state of emergency is still officially in effect to this day) was a legal owner of property situated in the area of Israel or enjoyed or held it, whether by himself or through another, and who, at any time during the said period- i) was a national or citizen of Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Transjordan, Iraq, or the Yemen, or ii) was in one of these countries or in any part of Palestine outside the area of Israel, or iii) was a Palestinian citizen and left his ordinary place of residence in Palestine a) for a place outside Palestine before September 1, 1948 or b) for a

place in Palestine held at the time by forces which sought to prevent the establishment of the state of Israel or which fought against it after its establishment. The dates used in the definition mean that virtually all Arab villages eventually occupied or annexed by Israel were in an area that could be included under the definition. The definition also meant that any Arabs forced out by circumstances of war or who left for a trip to a neighboring village could be declared an absentee and have their property confiscated by the custodian.<sup>152</sup> The custodian has the power to issue certificates as to who is an absentee, and such certificates have the effect of law unless it can be proven to be incorrect. Also, the law provides that custodians cannot be questioned about the sources of information involved in issuing a certificate. Another article of the law says that

any transaction made in good faith between the custodian and another person, in respect of property which the custodian considered at the time to be vested property shall not be invalidated and shall remain in force even if it is proved that the property was not at the time vested property.<sup>153</sup>

So, even if the custodian was proven incorrect in designating property as absentee, the injured party could not reclaim his land if the custodian has sold, transferred, or disposed of it in any way. It was possible for land owners to obtain a release of their property by making a request and securing the consent of a government committee. However, this was a complicated procedure which seldom met with success.<sup>154</sup> As stated previously, the custodian of absentee property turned over the land under his control to the development



authority in 1953, insuring that it would be used for Zionist purposes and not be returned to its original owners.

Another law used in land expropriation was Article 125 of the 1945 Defense Regulations. These regulations were part of the military government used in Israel until 1966. Article 125 allowed military governors to declare areas "closed" for security reasons. Once such a declaration was made, access to the area was restricted to those with written permits approved by the army chief of staff or the Minister of Defense. The Article gave Israel great power in preventing Arabs who had fled or been expelled from their villages during the fighting from returning home.<sup>155</sup>

The Emergency (Security Zones) Regulations of 1949 were also important in the military government procedure, and were extended to 1972. This law gave the Minister of Defense the power to designate "security zones" with approval from the Foreign Affairs and Security Committee of the Knesset. The security zones differed from closed areas in that, not only was access restricted by permits, but permanent residents could be required to leave by the authorities. A special committee was set up to hear appeals of orders to leave. However, the appeals committee has never reversed a military order removing residents from security zones. It is interesting to note the areas that were designated security zones. Almost half of Galilee (a northern section of the country where 60% of Israel's Arabs live), all of the Triangle (a central section which is the home for 30% of the Arabs), an area near the Gaza strip, and an area between Jaffa and Jerusalem were made security zones.<sup>156</sup>

It seems no coincidence that the zones were placed around Arab population centers, but part of the overall Israeli plan to expropriate Arab lands to make room for Jews.

An example of how these regulations were used is the village of Ikrit, the first village they were enforced against. The villagers were removed from Ikrit on November 5, 1948 under the security zone authority and told they could return in 15 days. That 15 days lasted three years, leading to a series of appeals to various administrative offices and to the courts by the villagers. In 1951, the Supreme Court ruled that there was no reason to prevent the return of the villagers to Ikrit. The military authorities failed to implement that decision and the villagers again appealed to the Supreme Court, who agreed to hear the case in February, 1952. However, on Christmas Day, 1951, the Israeli Army blew up every house in the village, which was populated by Christian Arabs.<sup>157</sup> The government subsequently announced the expropriation of all the village's land.<sup>158</sup> The case of Kafr Berem is quite similar. The village was evacuated by the army at about the same time as Ikrit. In September, 1953, the Supreme Court ordered the authorities to give reasons for preventing the return of the villagers. About two weeks later, the infantry and air force attacked the village and completely destroyed it. The land of Kafr Berem was also taken over by the government.<sup>159</sup> In 1972, former residents of Ikrit and Kafr Berem again appealed to be allowed to return home and were again denied that right by the Meir government.<sup>160</sup>

The fourth in the series of expropriation laws is the Emergency

Regulations (Cultivation of Waste Lands) Ordinance of 1949. This allows the Minister of Agriculture to

assume control of the land in order to ensure its cultivation in cases where he is not satisfied that the owner has begun, is about to begin, or will continue to cultivate the land.<sup>161</sup>

So, at the Minister's discretion, he could seize any land in Israel. Article 24 allowed the Minister to approve expropriation that resulted in the cultivation of untilled land, even where it had been taken without permission or before the law was passed. The period of time the Minister can hold this land has been extended to last as long as the state of emergency exists, which is to say permanently.<sup>162</sup>

The Emergency Land Requisition Law of 1949 also assisted in Israel's efforts to gain more land. This allowed the government to seize property when necessary for "the public services, the absorption of immigrants, or the rehabilitation of ex-soldiers or war invalids."<sup>163</sup> This was used primarily in urban areas and was applied mainly to housing.<sup>164</sup>

Since these four laws never actually transferred land ownership, but only affected who could use the land, Israel's plan was not complete. The Land Acquisition Law of 1953 was passed to empower the Minister of Finance to transfer the ownership of any expropriated land to the state of Israel through the development authority.<sup>165</sup> Article 2 stated that, with a certificate from the Minister of Finance, showing that the property was not in the possession of the owners on April, 1952, and that between May 14, 1948 and that date "it was used or assigned for purposes of essential development,

settlement or security," and "is still needed for any of these purposes," it could be turned over to the development authority.<sup>166</sup> The Knesset rejected a proposed amendment allowing owners who could prove the certificates false to request annulment of the transfer.<sup>167</sup> This law completed the expropriation mechanisms of the Israeli government by taking the final step of transferring the actual ownership and by legalizing previous land acquisitions.

To make sure that, once acquired, land would continue to be held by Jews, the Knesset passed the Basic Law: Israeli Lands in 1960. The two essential principles of this law illustrate clearly Zionist intentions in regard to land. They are as follows: 1) Jewish property is inalienable; land controlled by the state, the development authority, or the JNF cannot be transferred to any non-Jew; and 2) Only Jewish labor can be employed in Zionist colonies. The purpose of this whole series of legislation was to permanently expropriate Arab land to serve the purposes of the Jewish state. This is consistent with the Zionist goal of providing a home for Jewish exiles in the Diaspora. However, it presupposes that Jews have a greater right to property than non-Jews and creates a discriminatory system. The land gains of the Jewish immigrants and their control over its use show how remarkably effective the Zionists have been in achieving their goals. They also demonstrate that the state of Israel is based on the concept of colonialism, as Jewish immigrants to Palestine have built their society by dispossessing the native Arab population.

An extreme example of Israeli expansionism is the 1956 invasion of the Sinai Peninsula by Israel. When Egyptian President Nasser

announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal, Great Britain and France used military intervention in an attempt to prevent that. Israeli forces moved across the Egyptian border into the Sinai two days before the Anglo-French invasion began. The reasons behind Israel's actions have never been made clear. In 1956, Israel was facing no threats from any Arab state and had not been directly provoked.<sup>168</sup> Some have theorized that Israel intended to topple or at least discredit Nasser.<sup>169</sup> In any case, Israel offensively attacked a neighboring country without provocation.

Near unanimous world opposition to the military action was soon made clear. However, only U.S. pressure and the threat of economic sanctions convinced Israel to withdraw its forces.<sup>170</sup> To Arab nations, the Sinai campaign confirmed suspicions about the expansive character of Israel. Israel demonstrated this character in the 1949 war, expropriation of Arab land within Israel, and in the Sinai invasion of 1956.

#### The 1967 War and Its Consequences

It would be fruitless to evaluate the causes of the 1967 Six Day War with the intention to lay blame for aggression on either side. The Israelis claim that their air strikes and invasions were defensive actions to protect themselves from what they viewed as an imminent Arab attack on Israel. Arab troop movements, military pacts, threatening statements, and the closing of the Straits of Tiran seem to support that position. However, some believe that Israel realized it was not threatened by attack because of their superior military position and that Arab actions were propaganda measures and not



seriously aimed at an invasion of Israel. Vitold Yadlitzky, an Israeli humanist, claims that Air Force Commander Ezer Weizmann, Minister of Housing Mordechai Bentoff, military analyst Mattetyahu Peled, and Chief of Staff Chaim Bar-Lev all admitted that the General Staff did not fear an attack in 1967. In fact, Weizmann (now Defense Minister), stated that Israel was pursuing "our legitimate interests in the neighboring territories."<sup>171</sup>

In any case, the issue of who started the war has little bearing on its results. Israel gained 26,000 square miles of Arab territory in the war.<sup>172</sup> Until 1979, it refused to return any of that land. The area still held by Israel in Syria and Jordan coincides closely with the original territorial desires of the Zionists.<sup>173</sup> Much of this territory, especially the West Bank of the Jordan River and Jerusalem, hold religious significance for Jews and is included in the concept of "Eretz Israel", referring to land supposedly promised to Jews by God and which supposedly made up the ancient Jewish Kingdom in Palestine. Former Minister of Interior Elisha Efrat described the occupied territories as forming "part of the land of Israel in its natural boundaries."<sup>174</sup> To avoid the appearance of expansionism, Israel has claimed that holding the occupied territories is necessary for security reasons. However, American Colonel Merrill A. McPeak wrote in Foreign Affairs that, "Israel does not have a strong case, on the narrow argument of its own physical security for retaining any of the territory occupied after June 1967." He explained that no set of borders was a great deal more secure than those of pre-1967 and that security would be better found through

peace.<sup>175</sup> The crucial test in determining Israel's expansionist tendencies is its actual policies within the occupied territories and its intentions for the future. An important indication of this is the enforcement of the previously discussed military regulations against the population of the occupied territories. These allow detention without trial, punitive curfew, deportation, destruction of houses, and expropriation of land.<sup>176</sup>

The Sunday Times of London, June 19, 1977 reported on the use of torture on Israeli prisoners in the territories, concluding that "Torture is organized so methodically that it cannot be dismissed as a handful of 'rogue cops' exceeding orders. It appears to be sanctioned at some level of deliberate policy."<sup>177</sup>

In addition to violations of individual rights, Israel has been accomplishing a de facto annexation of much of the occupied lands through a variety of means. It has been estimated that 15,000 homes in the territories have been destroyed since 1967. Israeli journalist Amnon Kapeliouk reported in Le Monde May 15, 1975 that 10,000 farmers and Bedouin had been driven off by Israeli soldiers, their homes bulldozed and dynamited, their crops destroyed, and their wells filled.<sup>178</sup>

The Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights reports that from June 11, 1967 to November 15, 1969, 200,000 Arab homes in Gaza and the West Bank were dynamited.<sup>179</sup>

The villages of Yalu, Anwas, Beit Nuba, and Nusairat, and camps at Jilik and Jericho were destroyed by Israel.<sup>180</sup>

The effect of such actions on the Arab population in territories is not surprising. During a five-month period in 1968, 16,000 people left Gaza for the East Bank.<sup>181</sup>

Jordanian figures showed that in 1970, 428,669 refugees fled into the East Bank. Also, between 1967 and 1971, the population of the Gaza Strip declined from 389,700 to 381,000. In the West Bank, population decreased from 740,000 in 1949 to 625,000 in 1971. These figures are more significant when considering that both areas have birth rates among the world's highest.<sup>182</sup> Israeli actions in Jerusalem have been similar. The Washington Post reported in 1977 that 6,500 Arabs had been evicted from the old city of Jerusalem since 1968 to make room for Jews and to restore the Jewish Quarter there.<sup>183</sup> The Dean of St. George's Anglican Cathedral in Jerusalem criticized eviction of Arabs and demolition of their homes in 1977, claiming that it was an indication that the Israelis "will not tolerate the existence of a single Arab family in the Jewish Quarter."<sup>184</sup>

Despite all this evidence, Golda Meir maintained in her autobiography that Arabs had not been mistreated in the territories. She stated that there is no death penalty there, that only terrorists had been jailed, only the houses of Arabs sheltering terrorists had been blown up, and only Arabs inciting and encouraging terrorists were expelled.<sup>185</sup> As to expansionism, Meir claimed that Israel was entitled to dictate borders after the 1967 war.<sup>186</sup>

The removal of population from the territories gave Israel an opening to expropriate more land for the use of Jewish settlers. About 10,000 Israelis now live in the occupied territories. In 1975, the Labor Government approved a plan aiming at a Jewish population there of 30,000 by 1982 and 60,000 by 1992.<sup>187</sup> The Likud bloc victory in 1977 brought in a new government that revised this plan

somewhat. But Minister of Agriculture Ariel Sharon stated that "the government will first of all carry out the settlement plans that have already been decided." His plan called for 2 million settlers by the year 2000 and generally followed Labor's plan for their placement. That was to consolidate the strip along the Jordan River, populate the western slopes of Samaria, and widen the Jerusalem corridor.<sup>188</sup>

The result of these policies has been the establishment of 65 settlements in the West Bank, 26 in the Gaza Strip, and 26 in the Golan Heights.<sup>189</sup> In the two years of its control, the Begin government has been responsible for 21 West Bank settlements, 4 Gaza settlements, and one in the Golan Heights.<sup>190</sup> To compare the record of the Labor government to the Likud in the territories, an average of about 9 settlements per year were created in the 10 years of Labor control, while Likud has averaged 13 per year. The Begin government also took the important steps of legalizing the settlements and approving the Sharon plan.<sup>191</sup>

In terms of land, Israel has made substantial acquisitions. In the West Bank alone, Israel has expropriated 425,200 acres. Of this land, 50% was acquired through taking over public domain lands formerly belonging to Jordan, 20% was declared absentee property, 10% was expropriated by designating land as closed areas, and 20% was purchased.<sup>192</sup>

The actions of Israel in enforcing the Emergency Regulations, taking over land, establishing settlements, and facilitating population transfers violates several international agreements and has

been condemned by the United Nations. UN resolution 194 of December, 1948 called for the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes, which Israel has continually prevented. Their actions clearly violate the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Article 49 states that,

Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country, occupied or not are prohibited, regardless of their motive. The occupying power shall not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.

And Israel has also violated Article 53, which reads,

Any destruction by the Occupying Power of real or personal property belonging individually or collectively to private persons, or to the state, or to other public authorities, or to social or cooperative organizations is permitted.

On June 14, 1967, the UN passed Resolution 237, calling on Israel to

ensure the safety, welfare, and security of the inhabitants of the areas where military operations have taken place and to facilitate the return of those inhabitants who have fled since the outbreak of hostilities.

In no way has Israel complied with this resolution, and in fact, its activities have worked to achieve opposite results. The UN Security Council, with U.S. concurrence, expressed this view November 11, 1976, saying it "strongly deplores" Israeli policies in the occupied territories, calling them "an obstacle to peace". It expressed "grave anxiety and concern over the present serious situation in the



occupied territories as a result of continued Israeli occupation." The statement called on Israel to comply with the Geneva Convention in administering the territories. The Security Council also said, "the measures taken by Israel in the occupied Arab territories that alter demographic composition or geographical nature and particularly the establishment of settlements are strongly deplored." It also termed the expropriation of land and the transfer of populations invalid.<sup>193</sup>

Israel has also used direct means to facilitate its control over occupied Arab territory. Its manipulation of the economic relationship with the West Bank and Gaza was discussed, in part, previously. Israeli economic policy in the occupied territories, particularly the West Bank, seems to be aimed at exploiting their various economic sectors to suit Israeli needs and at increasing their reliance on Israel for economic health. For example, the number of Palestinian Arabs working in Israel increased from 6,000 in 1968 to 75,000 in 1974. This means that about 1/3 of the labor force in the occupied territories depends on Israel for a living.<sup>194</sup> A contributing factor in this transfer is that Israeli land expropriation has forced many farmers to seek other work. Those remaining in farming work under regulations issued by Ministry of Agriculture directing West Bank farmers to plant crops for the Israeli market. Seven agricultural committees were set up to supervise production so as to prevent competition and to meet Israeli market demands.<sup>195</sup> A major result of this was to increase the West Bank's usefulness to and dependence upon the Israeli economy. To extract benefits from

other sectors, the government allows Israelis opening new businesses in occupied lands to qualify for loans of up to 50% of working capital at 9% interest (low in Israel) and requires investors to put up only 20% of the total capital. This has increased industrial production, but primarily for the benefit of the occupying power.<sup>196</sup>

The "Guidelines for Regional and Physical Planning" by Elisha Efrat of the Interior Ministry illustrate Israel's intentions clearly.

The underlying ideas of the Master Plan are: development of agriculture for export, the urban development of Jerusalem and its satellites with a proportional growth of the various other towns in the area and their adequate industrialization; the settlement of the unpopulated Jordan Valley and the Dead Sea area and making it arable; the expansion of agriculture wherever possible; utilization of available groundwater resources; the clearance of slums and refugee camps; the development of the economic rural functions of the bigger villages; the improvement of inland and air communications; the utilization of the tourist potential of the area for the benefit of the entire country; and the development of the periphery of Samaria and Judea the West Bank so that it may become integrated with the rest of the country.

Obviously, Israeli policy is to expand its borders permanently by a wide variety of tactics. Military action, land expropriation, population transfer, and economic control form a comprehensive policy that cannot be coincidental. A crucial point in this is not simply the expansion itself, but the way in which it is occurring. Israel's methods are typical of the pattern set by the great colonial powers. The facts show that Israel is expanding the area under

its control, and doing so in colonial style.

### The Refugee Problem

The refugees created by the 1948 and 1967 wars are the responsibility of all the parties to the conflicts. It has been explained that Israel's role in creating this problem was substantial and was part of a deliberate government policy. It is also clear that Israeli policy has been aimed at preventing the return of displaced Arabs to their homes and has actually increased the displacement. However, Israel's position on the refugees remains that stated by Ben-Gurion, who said the state of Israel bears no responsibility for the mass flight of Arabs.<sup>197</sup>

That being the government contention, it logically follows that Israel should not accept responsibility for solving the refugee problem. Mass immigration, military action, enforcement of the Emergency Regulations, land expropriation, settlements in the occupied territories, and statements of government leaders all show Israeli determination to avoid that responsibility and prevent the return of any Palestinian Arabs to their original homes. Uri Avnery confirms that Israel has maintained that after 1948, the "imaginary" Palestinian nation ceased to exist and its conflict was solely with the Arab states.<sup>198</sup> However, the UN has not agreed with Israeli principles or policies in this matter. Following the 1948-49 war, UN resolution 194

Resolved that the refugees wishing to return to their homes and live at peace with their neighbors should be permitted to do so at the earliest practicable date, and that compensation should be paid for

the property of those choosing not to return and for loss of or damage to property which, under principles of international law should be made good by the government or authorities responsible.

And Resolution 242 ending the 1967 war called for a "just settlement of the refugee problem." Also, in 1967, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution calling on Israel to insure the safety and well being of the inhabitants of the occupied areas and to help return those people who had fled during the fighting to their homes. Although a member of the UN, Israel has not complied with these resolutions. Israel can argue with accuracy that Arab nations have not taken adequate steps to accommodate refugees but this does not relieve it of its responsibility. This is particularly true since it was Israel who expropriated their land, destroyed their homes, prevented their return, and brought in Jewish immigrants to replace them.

Violation of human rights in Israeli occupied territories have been documented and protested by many organizations. Some of the more prominent ones include the following: UN Special Committee, 1968-1978; International Committee of the Red Cross, 1969; Amnesty International, 1977; U.S. Department of State, March 1977 and February 1978; Sunday Times of London, June 1977; Swiss League of Human Rights, July 1977; and the International Inquiry Commission of the United Peace Council, 1975. Such a wide variety of groups agreeing on this issue lends credibility to the argument that Israel is systematically following a policy of violating human rights.

The laws, government policies, economic conditions, and social circumstances discussed in this chapter have more clearly defined the way in which Zionism has been implemented in Israel. In short, the goals of Zionism were to create a Jewish state and to accomplish the "ingathering of the exiles" into that state. This chapter has shown that to create a Jewish state, Israel has violated the rights of non-Jews and placed them in an inferior position. Also, in order to accommodate Jewish immigration into Palestine, Israel has systematically expanded the land area under Jewish control and displaced Arabs in the process.

This chapter has also pointed out that discrimination is being practiced against Oriental Jews, indicating the Western orientation of the state. The description of Israeli policy in the occupied territories shows that Israel was extracting economic and security benefits from the areas without allowing equal political representation or providing equal benefits to the existing population.

The evidence presented in this chapter indicates that Zionism, as implemented in the state of Israel, has placed Jews in a superior position to the original population, has created a system biased in favor of individuals with Western origins, and has expanded the territory under the state's control. These characteristics make Israel and the Zionist movement resemble the European colonial powers of the past, in both methods and results.



#### Chapter 4      POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS IN ISRAEL

The political structure of a nation is comprised of the matrix of institutions through which decisions are made and applied. Often, structure is as important as behavior in a political system and is equally influential in the decisions that are generated. This is particularly true in Israel where parties are the focus of nearly all political activity. The relationships and interactions between parties are major factors in determining public policy in Israel. Only Zionist ideology and an occasional strong individual personality can rival the power of parties in the political system. Political parties and their companion organizations (the Jewish Agency and the Histadrut) form the most important structural institutions in Israel.

One important characteristic of the Israeli system is its multi-party makeup. The large number of parties is partly the result of heterogeneity of the Jewish people who have historically been divided over issues of religion, socio-economic principles, foreign policy, and territorial claims.<sup>1</sup> Proportional representation also contributes to multiplicity, in allowing many parties to participate in the Knesset without achieving broad support. One indication of the strength of party diversity is that no party has ever gained a majority in Knesset elections. Coalitions are the established pattern.<sup>2</sup> David Ben-Gurion described the situation by saying, "Our electoral system has caused an exaggerated degree of fragmentation and the creation of many small factions that, taken together, form a majority in the kneset."<sup>3</sup>

A major function of most political parties is to nominate candidates for office. In a proportional representation system, where voters choose parties rather than individuals, their power is even greater. Israeli parties control the placement of candidates on election lists and the governing coalition controls Cabinet positions after elections. The manipulation of election lists is an important tool for Israeli parties. Representation of various factions on the party list of candidates can be used to bring them into the party without giving them real power. For example, although Arabs are not allowed to be members of Israel's Labor Party, it sponsors companion Arab election lists as a device to gain Arab votes.<sup>4</sup> The co-optation of some members of the Arab elite does not mean true representation. Since anyone aspiring to most local government posts, a Knesset seat, or a Cabinet position depends upon party leaders to be placed on an election list, their allegiance will be owed not to the people, but to the party. This is an encouragement to party discipline within the Knesset. Use of the parliamentary system also does this, in that losing a vote of confidence means the removal of the current government and holding new elections. Discipline is also reinforced by the competitive nature of the multiparty arrangement. To gain and maintain support, Israeli parties must take specific stands on issues and have an established and recognizable political perspective. This insures that most members will have general support for that party's position. Leaders have always had strong positions in Israeli parties. Party founders set their basic positions and then move to attract

supporters rather than altering their stands to please the membership. Traditionally, Israeli party leaders have also controlled the party's finances, giving them great power.<sup>5</sup>

Israeli parties have functions not related to elections or public policy making that are equally important in attracting support, co-opting factions, and encouraging party discipline. parties have acted as agencies for the absorption of new immigrants. They use patronage and other employment services to assist immigrants in finding jobs, they help them find housing, and they publish their own newspapers to attract newcomers. These services are sometimes used to draw active elements among immigrants into positions within the party in order to influence the rank and file.<sup>6</sup> Parties are also involved in establishing agricultural settlements and cooperatives. Some provide kibbutzim with credit and funds to operate on. The Kibbutzim then provide money and support to the party, becoming integral parts of the apparatus.<sup>7</sup> In addition, many parties set up banks and insurance agencies to serve existing supporters and attract new ones. Other services provided by parties include youth clubs, medical care, and recreational facilities.<sup>8</sup> So, parties have assumed many of the roles normally performed by private interests or the government as a whole. As such, they are often seen as instruments for attaining economic benefits as well as for the achievement of political goals. They are also major vehicles for socialization and integration in Israeli life. In a situation in which an individual may live in party housing, work at a job provided by the party, be a member of

a party trade union, and read the party newspaper, it is clear that breaking with a party can mean a serious change in life. The development and operation of political parties in Israel has involved them in non-political functions that provide services to people and provide them with additional tools with which to exercise and increase political power.

Two other organizations have functions which are similar to or compliment those of the political parties. One of these is the Jewish Agency. It acted as the government of Zionism before the creation of Israel and was recognized in Article 4 of the mandate agreement.<sup>9</sup> In this capacity, it became the worldwide spokesman for the Zionist cause and was heavily involved in international policies. Now the J.A. is a federation of political party secretariats that divides and distributes money raised outside of Israel. With no public control, the J.A. finances youth organizations, educational activities, and propaganda agencies to sustain the apparatus of Zionist parties. Its most important functions, however, are in organizing immigration, absorbing immigrants, establishing new settlements, and sustaining old ones.<sup>10</sup> This agency gives parties control over vast amounts of money to use for their own purposes, independent of democratic processes.

As important as the Jewish Agency is, it is not nearly as powerful as the Histadrut, Israel's General Federation of Labor. The Histadrut is controlled by the Labor Party, which totally dominated Israeli politics until the Likud bloc victory in 1977. The government, the Jewish Agency, and the Histadrut together constitute

the public sector of the Israeli economy which accounts for 2/3 of the country's economic activity.<sup>11</sup> The Histadrut also predates the existence of Israel.

As a labor union, the Histadrut is primarily interested in organizing workers. Throughout its existence, about 75% of Jewish workers have been members. It agreed to allow Arab members in 1959, and about 1/2 are now members.<sup>12</sup> The Histadrut consists of about 40 national unions which act as departments in the federation. It is organized with local workers' committees, regional labor councils, the Histadrut convention, the General Council, the Executive Committee, the Executive Bureau, and the Secretary General.<sup>13</sup>

The Histadrut has functions other than organizing and representing workers. It operates the largest medical organization in the country, with its health insurance fund covering 3/4 of the population.<sup>14</sup> In fact, the Histadrut health fund has a bigger budget than the Ministry of Health.<sup>15</sup> However, only about 1/3 of Arab workers are members in the insurance program.<sup>16</sup> It provides other social services such as social security benefits, a widow's fund, a pension fund, a fund for invalids, worker's training programs, and youth organizations. It also owns a publishing house and prints the country's largest morning newspaper, Davan.<sup>17</sup>

A subcommittee of the Executive Committee operates as an entrepreneur for the union. The General Cooperative Association of Jewish Workers finances and runs many economic enterprises such as construction firms and heavy industry. By 1960, half of the heavy industry in the country was the result of Histadrut actions. Early



in its history, the federation was involved only in ventures based on cooperative principles, like the collective agricultural settlements. In fact, most of these settlements are affiliated with the Histadrut. Today, it also acts in a capitalist fashion and is directly involved in almost every aspect of the economy. It also contributes in joint ventures with private capital, including foreign capital.<sup>18</sup>

The importance of the Histadrut lies in the facts that it performs many important social and economic functions normally carried out by governments or private enterprise, and that it is controlled by a political party. This allows the Labor Party to play a dominant role in Israeli life and to assume the position of governmental institutions even when it does not control the government. Such a powerful role contributed to Labor's near complete domination of the Israeli political system.

The following tables of election results show the extent of Labor's success.<sup>19</sup> Only the current government, led by the Likud bloc, has been formed without Labor participation.

First Knesset Election - January 25, 1949

| <u>Party</u>  | <u>% of<br/>Votes</u> | <u>Knesset<br/>Seats</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Mapai   | 35.7                  | 46                       |
| Mapam (includes Ahdut Haavoda)  | 14.7                  | 19                       |
| Herut   | 11.5                  | 14                       |
| United Religious Front (National Religious<br>Party and Agudat Yisrael) | 12.2                  | 16                       |
| Progressives  | 4.1                   | 5                        |
| General Zionists  | 5.2                   | 7                        |
| Communists  | 3.5                   | 4                        |
| Arab Lists (affiliated with Mapai)                                      | 3.0                   | 2                        |
| Others  | 10.1                  | 4                        |

Second Knesset Election - July 30, 1951

| <u>Party</u>  | <u>% of<br/>Votes</u> | <u>Knesset<br/>Seats</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Mapai   | 37.3                  | 45                       |
| Mapam (includes Ahdut Haavoda)                                      | 12.5                  | 15                       |
| Herut   | 6.6                   | 8                        |
| Torah Religious Front (Agudat Yisrael<br>and Poalei Agudat Yisrael) | 3.6                   | 5                        |
| National Religious Party  | 8.3                   | 10                       |
| Progressives  | 3.2                   | 4                        |
| Communists  | 4.0                   | 5                        |
| Arab Lists (affiliated with Mapai)                                  | 4.7                   | 5                        |
| Others  | 0.7                   | 0                        |

Third Knesset Election - July 26, 1955

| <u>Party</u>  | <u>% of<br/>Votes</u> | <u>Knesset<br/>Seats</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Mapai   | 32.2                  | 40                       |
| Mapam   | 7.3                   | 9                        |
| Ahdut Haavoda   | 8.2                   | 10                       |
| Herut   | 12.6                  | 15                       |
| Torah Religious Front (Agudat Yisrael<br>and Poalei Agudat Yisrael) | 4.7                   | 6                        |
| National Religious Party  | 9.1                   | 11                       |
| Progressives  | 4.4                   | 5                        |
| General Zionists  | 10.2                  | 13                       |
| Communists  | 4.5                   | 6                        |
| Arab Lists (affiliated with Mapai)                                  | 4.9                   | 5                        |
| Other   | 1.9                   | 0                        |

Fourth Knesset Election - November 3, 1959

| <u>Party</u>  | <u>% of<br/>Votes</u> | <u>Knesset<br/>Seats</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Mapai   | 38.2                  | 47                       |
| Mapam   | 7.2                   | 9                        |
| Ahdut Haavoda   | 6.0                   | 7                        |
| Herut   | 13.6                  | 17                       |
| Torah Religious Front (Agudat Yisrael<br>and Poalei Agudat Yisrael) | 4.7                   | 6                        |
| National Religious Party  | 9.9                   | 12                       |
| Progressives  | 4.6                   | 6                        |
| General Zionists  | 6.1                   | 8                        |
| Communists  | 2.8                   | 3                        |
| Arab Lists (affiliated with Mapai)                                  | 3.5                   | 5                        |
| Other   | 3.4                   | 0                        |

Fifth Knesset Election - November 2, 1965

| <u>Party</u>                                 | <u>% of<br/>Votes</u> | <u>Knesset<br/>Seats</u> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Mapai  | 34.7                  | 42                       |
| Mapam  | 7.6                   | 9                        |
| Ahdut Haavoda                                | 6.5                   | 8                        |
| Herut  | 13.7                  | 17                       |
| Agudat Yisrael                               | 3.7                   | 4                        |
| Poalei Agudat Yisrael                        | 1.9                   | 2                        |
| National Religious Party                     | 9.8                   | 12                       |
| Liberals (Progressives and General Zionists) | 13.6                  | 17                       |
| Communists                                   | 4.1                   | 5                        |
| Arab Lists (affiliated with Mapai)           | 3.5                   | 4                        |
| Other  | 0.7                   | 0                        |

Sixth Knesset Election - November 2, 1965

| <u>Party</u>                           | <u>% of<br/>Votes</u> | <u>Knesset<br/>Seats</u> |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Labor Alignment (Mapai, Ahdut Haavoda) | 36.7                  | 45                       |
| Rafi                                   | 7.9                   | 10                       |
| Mapam                                  | 6.6                   | 8                        |
| Gahal (Herut and Liberal)              | 21.3                  | 26                       |
| Agudat Yisrael                         | 3.3                   | 4                        |
| Poalei Agudat Yisrael                  | 1.8                   | 2                        |
| National Religious Party               | 8.9                   | 11                       |
| Independent Liberals                   | 3.8                   | 5                        |
| New Communist List (Rakah)             | 2.2                   | 3                        |
| Israel Communist Party (Maki)          | 1.2                   | 1                        |
| Arab Lists (affiliated with Labor)     | 3.3                   | 4                        |
| Haolem Hazeh (New Force)               | 1.1                   | 1                        |
| Other                                  | 1.8                   | 0                        |

Seventh Knesset Election - October 28, 1969

| <u>Party</u>  | <u>% of<br/>Votes</u> | <u>Knesset<br/>Seats</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Labor Alignment (Mapai, Ahdut Haavoda, Mapam, and Rafi) | 46.2                  | 56                       |
| Gahal (Herut and Liberal)                               | 21.7                  | 26                       |
| Agudat Yisrael  | 3.2                   | 4                        |
| Poaeli Agudat Yisrael                                   | 1.8                   | 2                        |
| National Religious Party                                | 9.7                   | 12                       |
| Independent Liberals                                    | 3.2                   | 4                        |
| New Communist List (Rakah)                              | 2.8                   | 3                        |
| Israel Communist Party (Maki)                           | 1.2                   | 1                        |
| Arab Lists (affiliated with Labor)                      | 3.5                   | 4                        |
| Haolem Hazeh (New Force)                                | 1.2                   | 2                        |
| Free Centre   | 1.2                   | 2                        |
| National List   | 3.1                   | 4                        |
| Other   | 1.1                   | 0                        |

Eighth Knesset Election - December 31, 1973

| <u>Party</u>  | <u>% of<br/>Votes</u> | <u>Knesset<br/>Seats</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Labor Alignment (Mapai, Ahdut Haavoda,<br>Mapam, and Rafi)                | 46.2                  | 56                       |
| Likud (Gahal, State List, Land of<br>Israel Movement, Independent Centre) | 32.5                  | 39                       |
| Agudat Yisrael and Poalei Agudat Yisrael                                  | 4.2                   | 5                        |
| National Religious Party  | 8.3                   | 10                       |
| Independent Liberals  | 3.3                   | 4                        |
| Arab Lists (affiliated with Labor)  | 2.5                   | 3                        |
| New Communist List (Rakah)  | 3.3                   | 4                        |
| Moked (Communists)  | 0.8                   | 1                        |
| Civil Rights Movement   | 2.5                   | 3                        |

Ninth Knesset Election - May 17, 1977

| <u>Party</u>                            | <u>% of<br/>Votes</u> | <u>Knesset<br/>Seats</u> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Labor Alignment                         | 24.6                  | 32                       |
| Likud                                   | 33.4                  | 43                       |
| Democratic Movement for Change          | 11.6                  | 15                       |
| Agudat Yisrael                          | 3.4                   | 4                        |
| Poalei Agudat Yisrael                   | 1.4                   | 1                        |
| National Religious Party                | 9.2                   | 12                       |
| Democratic Front for Peace and Equality | 4.6                   | 5                        |
| Shelli                                  | 1.6                   | 2                        |
| Shlomzion                               | 1.9                   | 2                        |
| Flatto-Sharon                           | 2.0                   | 0                        |
| Independent Liberals                    | 1.2                   | 1                        |
| Citizens Rights                         | 1.2                   | 1                        |
| Arab Lists (affiliated with Labor)      | 1.4                   | 1                        |
| Other                                   | 2.5                   | 0                        |

One of the most obvious characteristics shown in these tables is the merging and separating of parties and factions. But there is a basic set of parties involved in the system which have drawn a generally consistent number of votes throughout Israel's history. Most of these parties developed around their positions on issues and have merged or separated for a wide variety of reasons.

Mapai has been the dominant party in Israel and currently is the

major faction in the Labor alignment which includes Ahdut Haavoda and Mapam. Mapai was formed out of the political elite of the Zionist immigrants in Palestine prior to Israel's existence, led by David Ben-Gurion.<sup>20</sup> They are basically a social democratic party on domestic issues.<sup>21</sup> As previously mentioned, the party controls the Histadrut union. Ahdut Haavoda and Mapam are both Marxist oriented parties on economic and social issues, and their inclusion in the Labor alignment forces Mapai to move slightly leftward. Mapam has a history of concern for the Arab minority.<sup>22</sup> One of Mapai's strong points has been its ability to absorb different groups and retain power. Much of this flexibility is due to its early dominance of the entire society. It controlled the economic system through government investment and the Histadrut, it was responsible for economic expansion and rising living standards, and it maintained an internal cohesion of leadership.<sup>23</sup> Success in these areas led many people to see Mapai as the political embodiment of the state and the natural party to support. Also, as long as Mapai was successful in these areas, it was easy to accommodate divergent interests and dismiss opposition challenges. Troubles began to surface for Labor in 1965, when Ben-Gurion and Moshe Dayan left the party and formed Rafi. Differences between Ben-Gurion and Premier Levi Eshkol created the split. Ben-Gurion wanted Mapai to discontinue the alliance with Ahdut Haavoda, and favored single-member district elections over proportional representation. Eshkol and other Labor leaders rejected these demands.<sup>24</sup> Although Rafi subsequently won only 10 Knesset seats in the election of 1965 and Labor increased



its total from 42 to 45, the incident was the first major split of Mapai's ruling consensus. This division became sharper as Rafi strongly criticized Eshkol for his actions during the 1967 crisis. Eshkol was forced by the criticism to name Dayan as Minister of Defense.<sup>25</sup> The end of the war brought a new set of problems to Israel and to the Labor party in dealing with the occupied territories. No consensus could be reached in the party about whether to integrate them into the country, return all of them, or bargain for the return of some portions and keeping others. In the general conciliatory post-war atmosphere, Labor returned to its history of accommodation. In late 1967, both Rafi and Ahdut Haavoda completely merged with Mapai.<sup>26</sup> Upon Eshkol's death in 1969, Golda Meir was chosen Prime Minister. She was not committed to any particular position on the territories as were some of the other potential choices, but was a popular old guard Zionist.<sup>27</sup> In effect, the Labor party had decided not to push decisions of substance in order to maintain unity. While the divisions within the party reflected the diversity in public opinion, official party positions did not. This policy continued through the 1969 and 1973 elections. This led the party to boycott serious peace efforts during this time.<sup>28</sup> Even after the 1973 October War, Israel's position did not change substantially. Public disenchantment with Labor appeared to some extent in the December, 1973 elections as Labor lost five seats and Likud bloc made a strong showing, receiving more seats than any opposition party had previously. Since that time, Labor's basic position has been a willingness to negotiate with Arab countries and Palestinian groups that

would recognize Israel and renounce terrorism. That position meant no dealing with the Palestine Liberation Organization, the largest and most popular group representing the Palestinian people. Labor was prepared to withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza under favorable conditions. It stated that it was not committed to extension of settlements in the occupied territories and was against the enlargement of Jerusalem.<sup>29</sup> This position led to a static, though relatively tranquil period in Israeli history.

Several events contributed to ending this tranquility in 1976. First, the election of Jimmy Carter who was more sympathetic to the Palestinian position than previous U.S. Presidents and who seemed determined to make a Middle East initiative rather than accept the status quo, concerned Israel and Labor leaders. Then the government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was forced to resign in December, 1976 after losing a Knesset vote over a minor issue.<sup>30</sup> Before the subsequent elections were held, several scandals involving the financial dealings of top Labor party leaders, including Rabin, became public.<sup>31</sup> Rabin resigned as a candidate for Prime Minister but remained on the Labor election list.<sup>32</sup> He was replaced by Shimon Peres, but the party had been severely damaged.

The Labor alignment was already in trouble because of its appearance of weakness and ineffectiveness in a variety of areas. Lack of progress in foreign policy, vacillation on the issues of settlements and the handling of the religious groups trying to establish them, and its inability to deal with domestic labor disputes, social problems, and economic troubles had all caused public

disenchantment. In response to this disenchantment and to scandals in the Labor Party, university professor Yigael Yadin formed the Democratic Movement for Change. This party made inroads into Labor's base of support by presenting new faces with clean reputations, not connected with old style politics. The DMC focused on reforming the electoral process while staying in the mainstream on domestic and foreign policy issues.<sup>33</sup> Many observers thought the DMC would be a major factor in the elections and would be the only party with a chance to unseat Labor. But Menachem Begin's Likud bloc won the May 17 elections and became the first party to obtain more votes than Labor.

The base of the Likud is Herut, the traditional conservative opposition party. Herut opposed government intervention in the economy, favoring a free enterprise system.<sup>34</sup> However, its major emphasis has always been the Jewish historical right to the Land Of Israel, which to them is both conceptual and territorial. The concept is that a state for Jews in Palestine is the only way for the Jewish people to achieve fulfillment and keep their covenant with God. They believe the boundary of this state should coincide with the territory granted to Jews in the Old Testament and which was contained in the Biblical state of Israel. For them, this includes the West Bank and parts of Jordan.<sup>35</sup> The Herut ideology is based on the revisionist line within the Zionist movement led by Vladimir Jabotinsky. Other consistent planks in the Herut platform included the rejection of a peace treaty with Jordan because it contained "unredeemed" territory, support for peace treaties with other Arab

nations, acceptance of Arabs as Israeli citizens, and opposition to the creation of any Palestinian state.<sup>36</sup> Herut also supported France in the Algerian revolt because ties to France were more important than idealistic causes. Herut has been a strong supporter of South Africa and its apartheid policies because it is friendly to Israel and because of the presence of Jews and Jewish interests there.<sup>37</sup>

Herut was one of the top four parties in all elections up to 1965 and was second in 1955, 1959, and 1961. It was perceived as the only real opposition party since it had never participated in any government coalitions. In this capacity, it attracted many voters who were generally dissatisfied with the system.<sup>38</sup> The popularity of Herut forced Labor to adopt a more aggressive, expansionist foreign policy than it might have otherwise.<sup>39</sup> Its constant demand for widening borders to create the land of Israel also contributed to Labor's difficulties in building a consensus on the issues of the occupied territories and Jewish settlements there.

In 1965, Herut was joined by the Liberal Party to form Gahal.<sup>40</sup> The Liberals were oriented toward the private sector but accepted some government activity in the economy.<sup>41</sup> They were also more in line with the Mapai position on foreign policy and the merger brought some moderation in Herut statements.<sup>42</sup> Gahal won 26 seats in both the 1965 and 1969 elections, which was less than their combined total as separate parties in all previous elections. After the 1967 war, Gahal entered a unity government, its first participation in a ruling coalition. But it withdrew in 1970 after the government accepted the Rogers Plan for a Sinai agreement.<sup>43</sup>

In 1973, Gahal brought some minor conservative parties into its alliance to form Likud. The Parties involved were the State List, the Land of Israel Movement and the Independent Centre.<sup>44</sup> In the elections of that year, the Likud received 39 seats in the Knesset. This was 13 more than Gahal received in 1969, 5 more than the component parties totaled in 1969, and more than any party other than Labor in Israel's history. The Likud followed the same line as Herut, favoring a free enterprise economy and rejecting territorial concessions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Prior to the 1977 elections, the Likud made its position on the occupied territories very clear. The western part of the Land of Israel (the West Bank) was not to be partitioned. The solution to the Palestinian problem had to be found east of the Jordan River. Israel should not negotiate with the PLO. There should be no withdrawal from any occupied territories without peace agreements and no peace agreements without direct negotiations.<sup>45</sup> After the 1977 elections, Begin made it clear his position had not changed. When asked about the future of the occupied territories, he replied, "What occupied territories? If you mean Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, these are liberated territories and an integral part of the Land of Israel."<sup>46</sup> The Likud's continued refusal to seriously negotiate Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank and its record on settlements there indicate it has not deviated much from this position.

The Begin government's proposals for Palestinian autonomy are consistent with its general stance and do not include any major Israeli concessions.<sup>47</sup> The document's orientation is made clear by



its title, "Proposal of Principles for Full Autonomy for the Arab Residents of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza District, and for the Maintenance of the Jewish Settlement in These Areas." Two central aspects of this plan are that Israel will never allow the establishment of a Palestinian state and that after the transitional five years of the autonomy plan, Israel will demand sovereignty over the occupied territories. An aide to Begin stated the position clearly, saying, I assure you, if anything comes out of the negotiations, it will not be a Palestinian state. If that's denying them the right of self-determination, then so be it." Begin's plan would create an 11-member council elected by West Bank and Gaza residents that would administer hospitals, schools, social services, and municipal services. The council would not be granted any legislative functions and it would derive its authority solely from the Israeli military government of occupation. This implies that Israel could dissolve the council if it did not follow its charter or administer properly the laws and regulations passed for it by Israel. Also, the Israeli army would retain responsibility for security and public order and would act as an overseer of Palestinian autonomy. To this end, the army would not leave the occupied territories but would be redeployed from major urban centers to new emplacements in strategic rural areas. This is inconsistent with the Camp David Framework for Peace which says that, "The Israeli military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn as soon as a self-governing authority has been freely elected," that, "a strong local police force" is to be created, and that a joint Israeli-Jordanian force will insure

security. In regard to West Bank land, Begin's plan represents little change in the power presently enjoyed by the military government. State lands, formerly Jordanian public property, would remain under Israeli control, and could be used for security needs, settlements, or refugee rehabilitation. Land which is not legally registered in private ownership, but is privately cultivated could be used for security needs, including settlements. Privately owned land not in cultivation could be requisitioned by Israel for the same purposes. Privately owned and cultivated land would not be subject to government takeover unless unavoidably required for security or road building needs. If these principles were accepted, Israel would be able to expropriate any land in the occupied territories, if necessary for security reasons. Israel would retain the right to build settlements anywhere in the West Bank and Gaza with all settlers subject only to Israeli law under Begin's plan. It would allow Israeli citizens to purchase land in the occupied territories and Arabs to buy land in Israel if they become Israeli citizens. A crucial point is Israel's retention of control over water sources in the West Bank and Gaza which presently provide water to Jewish settlements and to parts of Israel proper. The proposal states that Israel will plan water usage with the Palestinian council. The overall autonomy plan illustrates Likud's intention to remain faithful to the ideology of Herut.

Of course, Likud is not a majority party and depends upon a coalition to maintain its control of the government. After the May, 1977 elections, both Labor and the Democratic Movement for Change

refused to join the government and Likud barely formed a majority in conjunction with the National Religious Party, Agudat Yisrael, and Poalei Agudat Yisrael. Moshe Dayan also voted for the coalition in exchange for the Foreign Minister portfolio.<sup>48</sup>

The National Religious Party has been a member of every government coalition in Israel's history. It compliments the high priority of the major parties for foreign policy with a low one, emphasizing primarily domestic issues.<sup>49</sup> Its position on economics is similar to that of the old Liberal Party, favoring private control while accepting a degree of government intervention. But its distinguishing feature is its vision of Israel as a theocracy.<sup>50</sup>

The NRP runs its own education system, and owns two banks and other economic enterprises.<sup>51</sup> Agudat Yisrael is the ultra-orthodox Jewish party with Poalei Agudat Yisrael as its affiliate representing orthodox Jewish workers.<sup>52</sup> These parties have been able to gain concessions from Labor and Likud on religious issues relating to activities on the Sabbath, kosher traditions, marriage, and women in the army by supporting their foreign policies. Another factor in their success is the government's wish to avoid any religious confrontations that might tear Jews apart and create serious internal dissension.<sup>53</sup>

In Israel's political system, avoiding these internal splits is a constant preoccupation. No party has ever had a majority, governments have all been coalitions, and each major party consists of factions or interests that must be accommodated. The emotional nature of many important issues in Israel complicates the situation. Such a system faces constant strain and requires delicate balancing to

avoid either political eruptions or stagnation, which would reduce a government's effectiveness and legitimacy. It is not surprising that Israeli governments have not always been able to succeed in submerging these differences. An example of that is the conflict between the Land of Israel Movement and the Peace Movement. The principles involved in this conflict have divided Zionists and Israelis throughout their history. The division crosses traditional party lines and relates to Zionism's fundamental purposes and practices and to the nature of the Jewish state. Israel Eldad, a leader in the Land of Israel Movement and former member of the extreme underground Stern Gang, spoke of these differences as a basic conflict in Israeli society.

The existence of the partition of the country is a function of the division of the existential soul of Zionism in its different layers. In these layers, from the beginning, there was a deep fragmentation, with guilt feelings toward the cosmopolitan ideals of socialism and liberalism, which were to liberate the world from nationalism - maybe even from the plague of the nation states - and which will liberate the Jews entirely from their separate unique existence... This is a typical schizophrenia. We have guilt feelings that we presumably have betrayed these universal ideas by turning to Zionism, which is of necessity 'reactionary' for it is a return to sometimes irrational roots... Had it only at least been possible to implement 'utopian Zionism' in 'ways of peace' through convincing the Arabs that we bring blessings to them too, and social liberation and progress! But in vain! To go on with psychological language, what is left is frustration - the feeling that perhaps Zionism is after all a reactionary movement.<sup>54</sup>

The Land of Israel Movement first surfaced as a party in the

1969 elections. It articulated the traditional ideology of Zionism, favoring more immigration, widening Israel's borders, and insuring the maintenance of Israel as a completely Jewish state. It supported whatever political, economic, or military policies that would achieve these goals. This especially included establishing settlements in the occupied territories, carrying out the central task of the Zionist state. Its membership came from the Labor Party, former underground organizations, right wing kibbutzim, and some religious groups.<sup>55</sup>

The Peace Movement never officially formed a party, but has been an active proponent of views diametrically opposed to the Land of Israel Movement. It believes that in order to exist securely, Israel must cooperate with the Arabs and obtain their consent. Strength is not sufficient to guarantee security. While certainly not anti-Zionist, the Peace Movement favors modifying the character of the state and deviating from the original precepts of Zionism to bring peace. It advocates territorial concessions, withdrawal of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, and internal change. These changes would include complete separation of church and state and equal rights and opportunities for Arabs. They describe the Land of Israel Movement as a "dangerous mixture of religious mysticism and national chauvinism," which sees war as a glorious mission.<sup>56</sup>

Its membership came generally from Mapam and left wing kibbutzim. Also, Labor Party leaders Pinchas Sapir, Abba Eban, and Yigal Allon took Peace Movement positions without officially aligning themselves.<sup>57</sup>



Between 1967 and 1973, the Labor government tried to simultaneously use policies of both movements. It labelled both as extremists and presented itself as the moderating force. The Peace Movement ideology was favored by a majority in the government, in that it provided the flexible approach to negotiation the government wanted to achieve progress. One step taken by the government reflecting this position was its participation in the Jarring talks, indirect negotiations through the UN, within the framework of Resolution 242. This implied an agreement to withdraw from the occupied territories. It also began using the Peace Movement's "stages to peace" concept by withdrawing from the cease fire lines of 1970 to permit the opening of the Suez Canal, providing Egyptian troops did not cross it.<sup>58</sup> However, many Labor Party leaders did not support these concessions and forced the government to take other actions not consistent with the Peace Movement. Prime Minister Golda Meir and Minister of Immigrant Absorption Israel Galili favored allowing Israelis to purchase land in the occupied territories, furthering Jewish settlements there, and considerable modification of borders. In 1968, Moshe Dayan proposed integrating the economies of southern Israel and the southern West Bank and suggested that Israel act as the established government in the territories while giving Arabs voting rights. Sapir opposed these ideas, fearing the results of incorporating a large Arab populous into Israel. Eban was also strongly opposed to this, saying it would be dominating Arabs against their will and amounted to apartheid.<sup>59</sup>

The government proceeded generally along the lines proposed by

Meir and Galili with some concessions to Dayan. In 1972, the Knesset "reaffirm(ed) and confirm(ed) the historical right of the Jewish people over the Land of Israel."<sup>60</sup> By 1973, the government had moved firmly toward the position of the Land of Israel Movement. It had established 44 settlements in the West Bank, Golan Heights, and the Sinai. It had enlarged Jerusalem's boundaries and made plans for the Judaization of Gaza. Economic integration of the territories had begun and overall, the basis for incorporating the West Bank into Israel had been laid by 1973. Although the majority of the Labor Party still claimed it opposed the process, it had nevertheless occurred. Public opinion opposing the return of occupied land, the Land of Israel Movement's inflammatory rhetoric, and Dayan's personal popularity all contributed to this situation. Also, steps taken according to Peace Movement principles did not achieve the progress expected. Following the Land of Israel Movement made the government appear strong and active, increasing its popularity.<sup>61</sup> In typical Israeli fashion, the government tried to follow two policies at once to accommodate all interests. But it found this impossible to do and by 1973, had embarked upon a policy of annexation without officially accepting the ideology behind it. This coincides closely with the earlier Zionist decision to follow revisionist Zionism advocated by Jabotinsky in establishing Israel, while claiming to follow more moderate Zionism. Both movements offered policies based on traditional conceptions of Zionism applied to current realities and the government chose to implement the basic principles of the Land of Israel Movement.

The Arabs also interpreted Israeli action this way and the result was the Yom Kippur war of October 1973. The war showed the Land of Israel Movement that hostility still existed and that the maintenance of expanded boundaries had allowed Israel to survive under a surprise attack, government bungling, inadequate preparation, and still recover to penetrate to within striking distance of Cairo and Damascus. But the Peace Movement argued that the so-called defensible borders had not prevented war as its program of returning territories and recognizing Palestinian national rights would have.<sup>62</sup> The government's first action was to scrap the Galili document which had set up a four-year plan for building settlements and acquiring land. It seemed to admit that added territory did not protect the country as well as Arab acceptance. It began to return to the Peace Movement idea of trading territory for guaranteed peace. However, the Peace Movement opposed the government's step by step program of interim agreements engineered by U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on the grounds that they were frittering away bargaining power for minor concessions. It favored a broader territorial offer in exchange for an overall settlement. But the government would not accede to this demand for fear of dividing the party and the country. The Land of Israel Movement, which by this time had joined the Likud bloc, opposed both approaches, claiming they would increase defense needs at the same time the willingness of the U.S. to help meet them would be decreased by oil considerations.<sup>63</sup> The 1973 election in which Labor lost support and the Likud gained, increased tension within the government even

more. Although its leaders still proclaimed support for a moderate approach based on Peace Movement principles, it was not in a strong position to take decisive action. Any dramatic territorial concessions could have created serious internal rifts with the potential for bringing down the government. The government was again trying its tightrope act, attempting to satisfy everyone. This explains its unclear position on settlements and the lack of progress achieved from 1973 to 1977. Then came the Labor Party scandals and the Likud victory of 1977.

The Likud government which included the Land of Israel Movement, began immediately to implement its position by legalizing existing settlements in the occupied territories and committing itself to the establishment of more. Its record on this, both in statements and actions is quite clear. The Camp David agreement is consistent with the Land of Israel Movement, but includes some things to please the Peace Movement. The Begin government must also submit to the system by accommodating diverse points of view with its policies. The return of the Sinai to Egypt, while not pleasurable to Begin, is acceptable within the context of the Likud position and the Israeli political system. It allows him to meet Peace Movement demands for territorial concessions and shows him to be flexible on this issue, capable of making progress. But at the same time, it does not really violate Land of Israel Movement principles. Israel has never seriously claimed sovereignty over the Sinai. It was the easiest territory to relinquish because it was not part of the historical Land of Israel. Returning the Sinai may also contribute to Likud's master

plan for maintaining control of the West Bank and Gaza by separating Egypt from the rest of the Arabs. Begin's Palestinian autonomy plan indicates he has no intention of giving up the West Bank and Gaza. The vagueness of the Camp David agreement and its lack of time specificity allows Israel and the Likud tremendous leeway in meeting its conditions, while it eliminates Egypt as a potential military threat.

The key points to understand in looking at Israeli political parties are that despite their public differences, their execution of policy is similar and that the system of coalitions and factions reduces the differences even further. All major political parties are Zionist and are oriented toward the Western world.<sup>64</sup> Only the Communists and the ultra-religious parties oppose the concept of Zionism. The major parties refuse to deal with the PLO or accept a Palestinian state. The main public difference between parties, particularly Likud and Labor, is over the return of the West Bank and Gaza. Labor and the parties supporting its position claim they are willing to return portions of those lands under certain conditions, while Likud has consistently stated that they are legitimate parts of Israel. However, Labor accepted the construction of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories and began a process of integrating the territories into Israel and making them dependent on it. And Likud is the first government to return any land to the Arabs and is now negotiating over the Palestinian question which they had earlier claimed had to be solved east of the Jordan River. Both parties have remained firm on the most crucial issues of opposition



to resettling refugees in Israel and the creation of a Palestinian state.

In economics, the parties have a variety of positions, from Marxism to a belief in completely free enterprise. The dominance of the Labor Party allowed them to set economic policy for most of Israel's history following a socialist-oriented position. The election of Likud brought some major changes, but Begin has not moved to cut government spending, either in defense or social services. Again, it is seen that party positions as reflected in actual policies do not differ greatly.

Elections in Israel have not brought about major policy changes. Labor's domination of the political process for 30 years meant that division and differences within the party had more impact on policy than public preferences. Labor showed itself to be adept at accommodating diverse interests without altering its policies more than was absolutely necessary. The division of support among the parties remained amazingly consistent in the first thirty years of Israel's existence. Some of this could be explained as a consistent division of public opinion, but the use of non-political functions by parties to attract and maintain support contributes much to this phenomenon. When election results are so consistent, it is natural that policy also remain consistent. The system itself plays a major part in Israel's policy consistency. The multi-party, proportional representation system in which obtaining a majority in the Knesset is virtually impossible, forces parties to depend on one another for support. The resulting trade-offs and compromises do not make major policy changes

likely. Since no party represents the majority, no party can feel comfortable in imposing its position on the country. Also, within the parties the leadership must form compromises between all the factions to avoid the possibility that disgruntled members could leave the party and form a new one. And as with the Land of Israel and Peace Movements, many differences can cross party lines. So internal party compromises tend to mitigate the differences between parties as well. In Israel, the importance of Zionism to the country and the commitment of the major parties to it further reduce the differences between them. In a system with these characteristics, it is unlikely that major policy shifts will occur within parties or as a result of a change in governments after an election. This has proven to be true in Israel.

## Chapter 5      LEADERSHIP IN ISRAEL

The preceding two chapters provide a basis for beginning a discussion of the nature of Israeli leadership. Chapter 3 showed that Jews of European-American origin have obtained superior positions in economics, politics, and in virtually all aspects of life in Israel over the rest of its citizens. The functions and powers of political parties described in Chapter 4 allow party leaders to control jobs, housing, and placement on election lists of their members. The system itself tends to perpetuate the existing division of power in the state, contributing to policy consistency. These characteristics have produced a country in which those reaching top positions must generally meet the conditions of belonging to a particular racial group, following the orders of existing party leaders, and accepting an established policy line. The dominance of government and political parties over all parts of Israeli life and their close relationship with other major institutions means that these conditions apply throughout the society and are passed on through the socialization process.

The historical development of Israel can explain much about the creation of the elitist society. During the period of 1882 to 1948, in which much of the Jewish immigration to Palestine occurred, nine out of ten immigrants were European and most of the native-born Palestinian Jews were of European origin. Zionism began in Europe and was influenced by the European concept of nationalism. The dominant life style in Palestine became that of the Europeans. According to Leonard Fein, author of a comprehensive study of Israeli politics,

"In education and aspiration, in political organization and content, in family life and consumption, it was the Western tradition that mattered."<sup>1</sup> The values of this group of European immigrants centered on Zionism, socialism, and the pioneer ethic.<sup>2</sup> The kibbutz was the perfect manifestation of these ideals. Jews establishing collective agrarian settlements in the Holy Land was the fulfillment of many Jewish desires. In many cases, kibbutz leaders became national leaders. Their status as creators and practitioners of an ideology made kibbutz leaders the embodiment of Zionism. By emphasizing particular values and elevating to leadership the spokesmen for those values, the kibbutz system helped establish an elitist social pattern.<sup>3</sup>

The nature of the Jewish national movement also contributed to elitism. It has always been involved in semi-legal or illegal work that required secrecy. This club mentality was the result of engaging in politics against Czarist Russia, operating under the British mandate, hiding from Nazis, creating an underground army, and maintaining the security of the state.<sup>4</sup> In such conditions, important information was available only to a select few, who became the only ones capable of decisive action, thus reinforcing their elite status.

When the state was formed, this group of leaders from the kibbutzim, the political organizations, and the military became the rulers of the state. It was a homogeneous group with strong ideological commitments and common experiences. The success of this group in leading the Zionist movement to the accomplishment of its goals reinforced their elite status even further. Their strong ideology, common sacrifices, and success led the elite to a point of

view that public opinion was not important.<sup>5</sup> The elite's interpretation of Zionism and how to implement it became the basis for policy rather than a public consensus. The political structure they established included no formal channels for communicating public will.<sup>6</sup> They detached themselves from the various informal and semi-formal groups in the country, reducing the influence of interest groups which are often a vehicle for the expression of public opinion.<sup>7</sup>

All characteristics of the pre-state Zionist movement can be seen in present day Israel. The cultural values of the society are still based on those imported from Europe, although since 1948, more than half the immigrants to Israel came from Africa and Asia.<sup>8</sup> Chapter 3 describes in detail the dominance of Western culture in Israel and the feelings of superiority of European-American Jews over Arabs and Oriental Jews. According to Alex Weingrod, the pioneer ethic of public service, cooperation, modesty, simplicity, egalitarianism, and dignity of labor retains official prominence since veteran elites still have political control and enunciate those values through the major national institutions. He also explains that education, military service and the policy of settling immigrants in cooperative agricultural communities contribute to the inculcation of these values. However, Weingrod describes a change in behavior among younger Israelis who emphasize materialism and middle-class values in the Euro-American sense.<sup>9</sup> Although these are contrasting value systems, they are both of Western origin. Any entrance into the elite still depends on adopting the European cultural style, whether



it be based on pioneer or middle class values.<sup>10</sup>

The secrecy involved in the Zionist was incorporated into the Israeli political system. Political communication in Israel has been described as a "gossip system" with great status accorded to those that obtain inside information. Such knowledge creates social as well as political distinctions between people in Israel.<sup>11</sup> Two Israeli journalists, Yuval Elizur and Eliahu Salpeter established "access to inside information" as a distinguishing quality, writing

Access to inside information is an important attribute of any modern elite member. But in Israel it seems this is of particular importance. Centuries of persecution have led Jews to attach extraordinary weight to any bit of information emanating from a center of power that in the past could have had life or death implications for them. They brought this keen sense of the importance of information with them to Israel, and there the relative intimacy of the entire structure only adds to the value attached to 'being in the know.' With independence came the conviction that having inside information is part of a two-way communication system: those who know quickly what important people think or do can also influence decisions before they are made final. The small size of the country also accentuates the snob value of inside information: those who know what Moshe Dayan said yesterday can also create the impression, or at least try to create it, that they are part of the decision-making circle. Thus information has become one of the most important coins of exchange at all levels of Israel's national and local elite.<sup>13</sup>

The Israeli elite is perpetuated not only by a dominant culture and limited access to information, but also by the political system. In addition to the preeminence of elite-controlled political parties,

the centralization of the government and the economy contribute to elitist politics. All major political organizations, economic institutions, and public issues are national in scope. Local politics is relatively unimportant in Israel, while national politics is well organized and highly centralized. Israel's small size inhibits the growth of local attachments. Local elections are heavily influenced by the national leadership and party affiliation. Because of this, immigrants rising to high positions in local government have not been able to use this as a springboard to national prominence.<sup>14</sup> Proportional representation also limits local power. Local officials have few resources to distribute and must make requests for assistance or policy change to national authorities who make the final decisions. As a result, veteran European groups who initially controlled parties and the administrative bureaucracies are able to monopolize strategic political positions and control entrance into the elite.

Economic power is subject to the same conditions since much of economic policy is government planned. Also, government and party connections to the Jewish agency and the Histadrut increase the power of the elite over the nation's economy. In Israel's short history, foreign policy, defense, economic development, and immigrant absorption have been the dominant political issues. These are all national in scope, requiring centrally established policy. Also, the mechanisms to deal with those issues are set up to limit public access. For example, treaties made by the government do not have to be approved by the Knesset and are not subject to court authority. The

Foreign Affairs Committee of the Knesset is the only group that can demand explanations of policy or action from the Foreign Minister, and it is always controlled by the ruling party.<sup>15</sup> Again, intra-party dynamics are superior to either public opinion or the relationship between parties in the Israeli decision-making system. Prior to 1977, most important decisions in foreign affairs, defense, and finance were made within the Labor Party rather than through a public dialogue or an inter-party process.<sup>16</sup> The fact that Israel is still in a state of Emergency enables the government to use powers without Knesset approval. The government is more significant than the Knesset in Israeli politics, the ruling party controls the government, and elites control the parties. With the veteran European elite controlling parties, economic institutions, access to information, and the most significant policy decisions, their position is extraordinarily strong.

The small number of people significantly involved in Israeli policy-making through the system described in the preceding discussion is astonishing. The Israeli journalists Elizur and Salpeter stated in the Preface to Who Rules Israel? that,

it is enough to know one hundred, perhaps one hundred and fifty or at most two hundred, people in Israel in order to know who is responsible for decision making in the political and military spheres, who makes the wheels of the economy turn and who molds public opinion. Despite immigration to Israel during its twenty-five years of existence, despite the fact that during that period its population grew almost four fold - and perhaps because of these factors - the range where in all

political, economic, and perhaps even cultural power is concentrated is extremely narrow.<sup>17</sup>

Michael Brecher, author of two major works on Israeli foreign policy, cites even a smaller number. In The Foreign Policy System of Israel, Brecher says that through interviews and research, he identified 18 persons, mostly from the Mapai mainstream, who made up the high foreign policy elite from 1948 to 1968. Within this group he found an inner circle of nine who played commanding roles.<sup>18</sup> From 1948 to 1964, only 39 persons held ministerial positions and in Israel's first 25 years, there were only 4 Foreign Ministers.<sup>19</sup>

A look at the composition of the Israeli elite confirms the Western dominance of the state. Of the 18 persons in Brecher's high foreign policy elite, 13 were born in Eastern Europe. The inner circle he identified for the period 1948 to 1968 consisted of David Ben-Gurion, Moshe Sharrett, Golda Meir, Moshe Dayan, Shimon Peres, Levi Eshkol, Abba Eban, Pinhas Sapir, and Yigal Allon. Of these, six were born in Europe, one was from South Africa, and only two were native Israelis, both with European parents.<sup>20</sup> The first Israeli Cabinet had all been born in Eastern Europe between 1880 and 1900 and came to Palestine before 1924. By 1963, the Cabinet included eight Europeans, two native Israelis, and one Iraqi. The 1967 Cabinet had nine central or eastern Europeans, two native Israelis, and two from other countries.<sup>21</sup>

The following table shows the geographical origin of Knesset members through 1961. It clearly shows the European dominance over the Israeli legislature.

### Geographical Origin of Knesset Members

| Region of Birth                           | First<br>Knesset<br>1949-51 | Second<br>Knesset<br>1951-55 | Third<br>Knesset<br>1955-59 | Fourth<br>Knesset<br>1959-61 |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Israel                                    | 13                          | 20                           | 18                          | 23                           |
| Eastern Europe and<br>Russia              | 86                          | 84                           | 83                          | 77                           |
| Central Europe, includ-<br>ing Germany    | 10                          | 10                           | 11                          | 9                            |
| Balkans                                   | 1                           | 1                            | 2                           | 1                            |
| Moslem countries                          | 2                           | 3                            | 5                           | 9                            |
| Western Europe                            | 1                           | --                           | --                          | --                           |
| United States and<br>British Commonwealth | 2                           | 1                            | 1                           | 1                            |
| Other                                     | 5                           | 1                            | --                          | --                           |

Of the 212 persons who served as Knesset members from 1948 to 1964, 73% were born in Eastern Europe. The first Knesset contained four members of Asian-African origin and three native Israelis of Middle East background. In the fifth Knesset of 1961, 9 Easterners were members as were two native Israelis of Eastern origin.<sup>23</sup> The eighth Knesset of 1973-1977 had 14 Oriental Jewish members and six Arabs.<sup>24</sup> Those two groups make up about 75% of Israel's population yet held at that time, one-sixth of the Knesset seats. The top officials of the Histadrut are overwhelmingly of Russian, Polish, and German descent.<sup>25</sup>

It appears that the advantages of European Israelis described in Chapter 3 and the political party system described in Chapter 4 have indeed put a European elite in control of Israel. It is true that the 1977 Likud victory brought in new faces such as Begin, Ezer Weizmann, and Ariel Sharon. But Begin and Sharon had been party leaders throughout Israel's history, and Weizmann is a Herut veteran whose uncle was the state's first President. Begin's Cabinet also



included Labor Party member Dayan and Yigal Yadin, former Army Chief of Staff, who was also active in pre-state affairs. So Begin's Cabinet contains many elements of consistency and has not brought drastic change in the nature of Israel's elite. And should the Begin government fall, veteran Labor leader Shimon Peres would be the likely successor.

The fact that most of Israel's leaders share common racial origins and common experiences in forming the state, undoubtedly affects their policy positions. The dominant factor in the perspective of all of them is, of course, their Jewishness. Regardless of other differences, they all believe in Israel as a Jewish state necessary to solve the Jewish problem. No member of the elite could ever take a stand against that. Also, with the exception of Eban, none of the top Israeli leadership favors real conciliation with the Arabs. They may make gestures designed to create a more peaceful and secure situation, but are not really committed to building friendships with the Arab people. Most follow Ben-Gurion, Meir, Dayan, Begin, Peres, and Allon in emphasizing strength and coercion in conducting foreign policy.<sup>26</sup> The common personal traits among Israel's leadership are decisiveness, rigidity, and sometimes extremism.<sup>27</sup> Such traits are the result of their obsession with the heroic fight for statehood and contribute to the aggressiveness and intransigence of the state's foreign policy.

The basic principles of Zionism are adhered to by all members of the elite. This is reflected in the country's policy consistency over the years. Despite stated differences over territorial

concessions and over taking a moderate or hard line approach toward the Arabs, policies have not differed much. Regardless of who has been Prime Minister or which party has been in control, foreign policy actions have been quite similar. Since 1967, no action has been taken to indicate a willingness to give up the West Bank or Gaza, and both Labor and Likud governments have allowed extensive Israeli settlements there. Israel has always followed an aggressive military policy, both toward perceived threats from Arab states and Palestinian terrorism. Israel has not hesitated to use force or to invade the territory of other countries to achieve policy goals regardless of who has been in power. This is shown by military action in the 1955 Sinai invasion, the 1967 war, and the recent incursions into Lebanon.

The historical development of Israel, the strong influence of Zionist ideology over state action, overriding concern with security matters, the superior status of Western Jews over other groups in the country, the centralized and party-dominated political system, the role and functions of political parties, proportional representation elections, the lack of vehicles for effectively communicating public opinion, and limited access to important information are all factors in the creation of an elitist system in Israel. It could be argued that in Israel's short history, dominated by conflict and war with its neighbors, that it was natural for an elite to develop as a guiding force in creating and maintaining the state, and with time and the achievement of stability, wider participation in all areas of decision making and more equality in other aspects

of society would result. But the present system of distributing political power and economic resources is so biased toward the existing elite that it has become self-perpetuating, restricting the opportunities for general public participation in and access to decision making centers, regardless of external and internal conditions. Also, the rigid views of the elite and its present control over all major institutions is working against the achievement of stable conditions that might allow an opening of the system. The existence of a Western elite in control of all important aspects of the society with a system working to perpetuate that control makes it very likely that past policies will continue.

Chapter 6      CONCLUSION: THE EFFECT OF ISRAELI DOMESTIC POLITICAL  
CHARACTERISTICS ON THE MIDDLE EAST  
CONFLICT

French statesman Jean Monnet once said that,

Peace depends not only on treaties and promises. It depends essentially on the creation of conditions which, if they do not change the nature of men, at least guide their behavior toward each other in a peaceful direction.<sup>1</sup>

Studying the propositions in Chapter 1 has led to the conclusion that, despite the successful completion of a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, the creation of a state based on Zionist ideology, the translation of that ideology into government policy, and the political system of Israel have created conditions that work against a complete resolution of the Middle East conflict and drive the participants away from peace.

One major factor in this situation is the existence of racial discrimination throughout Israeli society. Chapter 2 showed that racism is a part of Zionism. Several Zionist principles indicate racist tendencies. The basic belief that Jews must be set apart or liberated from all other people in order to fulfill their individual and collective potential implies something negative about non-Jews. The statements of individuals instrumental in the development of the Zionist concept and of those who participated in the political movement express racism more directly. Lack of concern and even contempt for other cultures, belief in Jewish superiority, and claims of greater rights for Jews than for others within Palestine can be seen in many of the writings and statements of Zionists. The European

origin of Zionism contributed to the development of these ideas as Zionist leaders adopted the chauvinistic attitudes of European nationalism. Some factions of the movement abhorred racism and sought to rejuvenate Jewish culture by adherence to high moral standards. However, as described in Chapter 3, the state and the society built by the Zionists exhibits a great deal of discrimination, much of which appears purposely designed into the system. Evidence presented indicates that discriminatory treatment is not limited to non-Jews, but is practiced against Jews of African and Asian descent as well. In areas of citizenship, income and occupational distribution, immigration, education, politics, and culture, the position of and opportunities for individuals is heavily influenced by race. European Jews have achieved and maintained superior status in Israel with the help of government policy.

Failing to respond to the needs and desires of Arabs and Oriental Jews in Israel could threaten the security of Israel from within. Yigael Yadin, current Israeli Cabinet member, said that,

internal problems are so pressing that if they were to be neglected on the pretext that we have too much of a defense problem, those very internal problems would be so exacerbated that they would threaten the very security of Israel.<sup>2</sup>

In 1949, Israel's first President, Chaim Weizmann, said, "Our security will to a great extent depend not only on the armies and navies we can create, but on the internal moral stability of the country, which will in turn influence its external political stability."<sup>3</sup>

This situation has helped build an atmosphere of distrust,



fear, and cultural confrontation in the Middle East. Israel's history of discrimination against its Arabs and Oriental Jews has made it appear as a product of Western imperialism rather than as a necessary entity for the protection of the world's Jews. Leaders of the Oriental Jewish community have claimed that their relegation to second-class status in Israel diminishes the chances for rapprochement with the Arabs.<sup>4</sup> The Zionist belief in Jewish superiority and disrespect for Middle Eastern culture are emotional issues that involve national and racial pride. This is especially dangerous in the Middle East where religious and emotional attachments to the land already play such an important role. These conditions lead the parties involved to take rigid stances, reducing the potential for compromise and making meaningful communication difficult.

The record of Israel on the issue of land is clear. Zionists began a pattern of territorial gains long before the establishment of Israel that has continued to the present. Land has been obtained through direct and indirect purchase, taking over abandoned land, force of violence, and force of law. As shown in Chapter 3, most of these actions were sanctioned by the official Zionist organization and are still supported by the Israeli government. Zionist control over land in Palestine was extended during and after the 1947 war that created Israel. It has continued within the state's borders through expropriation of Arab owned land. More significant, however, is Israel's tendency to enter and confiscate land in neighboring countries. This was attempted unsuccessfully in 1955 with the Sinai

invasion and successfully in the 1967 war. Israel defended its 1967 gains from Egypt, Jordan, and Syria in 1973 and has continued a policy of solidifying its control over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank areas through the building of settlements there. In 1979 and 1980, Israeli military forces entered Lebanon, but its intentions there are not yet clear. Expansion of the Jewish state is consistent with, even required by, Zionist ideology. To achieve the goals of creating a state for all the world's Jews and restoring Jewish control over Eretz Israel, more land gains are necessary. Returning the Sinai peninsula to Egypt does not conflict with Zionism because it was not part of what is considered as ancient Israel and holds little religious or historical significance for Zionists.

The Zionist record of expansionism and its justification of that record through its ideological claims of historic and religious rights is a continuing source of hostility in the Middle East. It represents a threat to Arab territorial sovereignty and violates many international agreements which Israel has been a party to. Acceptance of Israel's legitimacy by the Arab states is unlikely while Israel continues to expropriate the land of its Arab citizens, hold on to Arab land captured by force, and invade the territory of neighboring countries regularly. These actions also block the satisfaction of Palestinian Arab demands without which there can be no resolution of the conflict. Zionist ideology and its implementation in the form of territorial expansion are obstacles to a peaceful and just settlement in the Middle East which would insure stability there.

The relationship between domestic and foreign policy is complex. The discussion so far has emphasized the effect of domestic politics on foreign policy actions. But foreign policy can also be used as a tool in achieving domestic goals. Israel has pursued an aggressive foreign policy throughout its history based on Zionist principles and traditions. Besides achieving specific foreign policy objectives, this aggressiveness has been an effective way to deal with internal strains. Uniting its citizens around an expansionist crusade or in response to a perceived threat can divert public attention from social and economic problems. The poor state of the Israeli economy and conflict between racial groups make actions such as capturing the territory of other states particularly valuable. Doing nothing would allow frustrations and animosities to grow and tackling domestic issues directly could damage the nation's (and the government's) cohesion. Engineering a foreign policy victory has often been an easy way to unify the nation and avoid confronting difficult domestic problems. Considering the seriousness of Israel's internal problems and the availability of Zionism as both a source and a justification of action, aggressive foreign policy will likely continue to be an important part of the country's politics.

The dominance of Zionism over Israeli policy decisions severely limits the range of choice available to government leaders. Any compromise on major issues such as Israel's claim to a historic right to settle parts of the West Bank, the return of land to Palestinian Arabs, and the creation of a Palestinian state would not be consistent with the Zionist precepts outlined in Chapter 2. Chapter

3 indicates that many domestic policy decisions have conformed to these precepts. An acknowledgement of legitimate Palestinian rights in regard to land or nationality would raise questions about the justification of any set of boundaries for Israel and about its existence as a Jewish state. Relinquishing occupied land would reduce Israel's ability to accommodate new Jewish immigrants, which is the central task of the state. Also, granting equal rights, economic opportunities, social status, and political representation to non-Jews in Israel would seem to be a weakening of the commitment to Zionism's goal of a Jewish state. If non-Jews can reach important positions in politics, business, communications, or other areas, the possibility would exist that part of the Jewish state could be controlled by non-Jews. So, to carry out Zionism, Israel has worked to eliminate this possibility. Underlying Israel's domestic and international difficulties is the fundamental Zionist teaching that anti-Semitism is inherent and incurable. Israel cannot make concessions to its Arab neighbors nor work to improve the lives of its non-Jewish citizens if it believes them to be natural and permanent enemies to Jews and their state. Major options available to Israel to bring internal justice to the Jewish state and peace to the Middle East are not considered because of the influence of Zionist ideology over the decision-making process. A more flexible approach on the part of Israel is necessary to resolve the major issues in the Middle East but impossible within the principles of Zionism.

It does not appear likely that Zionist ideology will be ignored

or rejected by Israeli leaders in the foreseeable future. This paper has documented the significance of Zionism as the force that created the state and now guides its actions. But Chapters 4 and 5 indicated that more than commitment to ideological principles is involved in maintaining the strength of Zionism and the government policies resulting from it. Political structure and processes in Israel operate in a manner that discourages major modification of Zionist ideas and government policy. The historical role and position of political parties contributes greatly to this. Most of the major Israeli parties originated as part of the Zionist movement to create Israel and are still loyal to the goals of that movement. Since the first election in 1949, there has been a generally consistent division of votes among the major parties and alignments. Only exceptional events like the October war of 1973 and the Labor Party scandals of 1976 have brought significant change in vote distribution. Clear and consistent positions on issues by parties is one factor in this. Also, the social and financial service functions of the parties help them to attract and maintain a base of support.

Structural features such as the proportional representation electoral system; multiple parties; and the centralized nature of parties, government, and the economy are causal factors in ideological and policy consistency. This system has led to a series of coalition governments in Israel in which no party represents a majority of the population. It has also led to a situation in which party loyalty is of more importance than public representation. Party leaders are primarily interested in maintaining support and



rely on negotiations with other leaders to make policy decisions and to maintain power. The inevitable results of such a system are a sluggish and indirect response to public demands and an extremely slow process of making any changes in policy direction. The power of this policy inertia is illustrated by the similarity in foreign policy actions of past Labor governments and the Likud government which took control in 1977, as detailed in Chapter 4. The tendency toward policy consistency that originated in the commitment to Zionism is reinforced by Israel's political structure.

The orientation of these policies is determined not only by Zionism but also by the nature of the country's leadership. Chapter 5 discussed the make-up and the characteristics of Israel's leadership and showed it to consist essentially of a small elite of Western Jews committed to traditional Zionist principles. The Israeli elite was created by the superior position of Western Jews throughout the society and the political structure which protects the position of existing leaders. Limited access to significant information also contributes to elite power. This position of the elite on major issues has remained basically the same throughout Israel's history. In fact, Chapter 5 indicated that the individual members of the elite group have not changed much. The existence of this elite and its influence over policy decisions is an important additional factor in the inflexibility of the Israeli system and the intransigence of its foreign policy positions. The combination of the elite's commitment to conservative Zionism and its Western nature and orientation help continue the expansionist and racist policies of the state. The

influence of Israel's elite, together with its political structure, limit the possibility that Israel will be open to policy change or adopt a flexible approach to Middle East issues.

The most significant of all these issues is the question of the Palestinian Arabs. People who were displaced through the various aspects of mass Jewish immigration, who exist as second-class citizens within Israel, or who reside in Israeli-occupied territories form the crux of the conflict in the Middle East. Zionist and Israeli response to these people has been varied. During early Zionist immigration to Palestine, the existing population was largely ignored. Upon recognition of their existence, the Zionist movement proved indifferent to the situation of Palestinian Arabs, regarding their own goals as paramount. The military takeover of Arab land by Israel in 1967 brought more Arabs under Israeli control and forced the government to deal with them in some way. But there has been no comprehensive policy on the issue of the Palestinians yet established by Israel. Chapter 3 illustrated that Arabs have not been granted full citizenship within Israel. And although Israel has moved to tie the West Bank economy to its own and has established Jewish settlements there to extend its control, it has not accepted the idea of making the area an official part of Israel. It also refuses to seriously discuss the creation of a Palestinian state to satisfy the demands of its Arab opponents. Begin's proposed Palestinian autonomy plan would give Arabs minimal administrative responsibilities while retaining real control for Israel. Israel seems to be extracting the economic, territorial, and security benefit of controlling the West

Bank without accepting complete responsibility for providing benefits to the area or for giving West Bank residents any voice in determining policy. This is nothing short of colonization. It is consistent with previous Israeli actions and Zionism in that it increases the area under Jewish control while refusing to allow meaningful participation in the system by non-Jews.

Flexibility is the essential element necessary to resolve the Palestinian problem and all other Middle East issues. No treaty can be effective in achieving peace and stability without changes in the attitudes of all parties involved in the conflict. Since Israel is a part of the Middle East, exists on land previously owned by Arabs, and was assisted in its creation by much of the international community, it has a primary responsibility in making the necessary adjustments. It should grant to Palestinians the same rights to nationhood that it claimed for Jews, and it should offer to its neighbor countries the same respect for territorial sovereignty and security as it demands for itself. However, commitment to Zionism, racist and expansionist government policies, a political structure that works against the achievement of substantial change, and elite control of the government seriously restrict Israel's ability to be flexible or to alter its existing policies on major Middle East issues.

The results of such a rigid system could be disastrous for Israel and the world. Regardless of any moral responsibility to deal justly with its own citizens and its fellow nations, it is in Israel's own interest to adjust its ideological perspective and

change its policies. Current domestic policies create internal conflict that could affect Israel's security from within. Those same policies reduce the possibility for Israel to become an accepted member of the Middle East community and have undermined its international position. Most dangerous, the present domestic and foreign policies of Israel and its inflexible political system could contribute to renewed military conflict in the Middle East. With the increased political power of Arab nations due to oil, and the presence of nuclear weapons in Israel, such a conflict would have worldwide consequences with the possibility of leading to a big power confrontation.

The threat of such a confrontation is one factor in convincing the United States to take such a major role in seeking a solution to Middle East problems. The Camp David Accords reached in September, 1978, would not have been possible without the participation of the U.S. The same is true of the Egypt-Israel peace treaty signed in March, 1979. The negotiation of an official end to the hostility between Egypt and Israel and their agreement on a general approach to a comprehensive Middle East peace are obviously significant. However, it is not so obvious that they have led to substantial progress toward an overall settlement. There are basic weaknesses in the Accords that make achieving this unlikely. Most important, the agreement does not recognize a right of the Palestinian Arabs to self-determination. In fact, residents of the West Bank and Gaza Strip were not given independent status in future negotiations but were included as potential participants within the

delegations of Egypt or Jordan. Camp David did not set any objective to be worked for in terms of the ultimate source of authority in the occupied territories. The vagueness of the agreement leaves in doubt whether Israel intends to relinquish control over the area to any significant degree. Since the development of any plan for Palestinian autonomy was set up to occur after the conclusion of the peace treaty, Israel was not forced to make any prior commitments on this issue. The real meaning of Camp David is that Israel was able to obtain large benefits while making only minor concessions. Essentially, Israel agreed to return the Sinai to Egypt and to discuss self-government for the West Bank and Gaza Strip. In return it received promise that its security would not be compromised in the negotiating process, that the strongest of its past enemies would not attack it, and that economic aid and an adequate oil supply would be provided. The Camp David Accords and the subsequent peace treaty put Israel in a position from which it could remain intransigent on the most crucial Middle East issues while becoming safer than it has ever been.

This intransigence has been a major factor in the criticism of Israel by the international community. Israel has been condemned many times by the UN, most seriously by the 1973 resolution equating Zionism with racism. As mentioned previously, many nations and organizations have protested violations of human rights and international agreements in regard to the occupied territories. Israel is most sensitive to criticism from the United States. The U.S.



withheld aid from Israel when it refused to halt work on a hydroelectric project in the demilitarized zone between Israel and Syria. In 1953, when Israeli troops killed a large number of Arabs in the village of Qibya, it was the United States that brought the matter before the Security Council. The U.S. also pressured Israel to withdraw from the Sinai in 1955 and voted to condemn it for a 1966 attack on Jordan.<sup>5</sup> Official criticism was also made over Israeli military action in Lebanon in 1979, particularly regarding the use of American supplied weapons there. Presently, the U.S. and Israel disagree strenuously over Jewish settlements in the occupied territories with the U.S. condemning them as obstacles to peace.

Some changes have resulted from these external pressures. Israel did return the Sinai to Egypt and is discussing the future of the West Bank. Also, its status in the U.S. is still high as most American officials continue to affirm support for Israel. The Camp David Accords included U.S. guarantees of economic and military aid and an assurance that an adequate oil supply would be provided. A major indication of the limits to U.S. opposition to Israeli policies was the resignation of UN Ambassador Andrew Young. Young's resignation came after he was widely condemned for meeting with the UN observer representing the Palestine Liberation Organization. Although the meeting was between participants in the UN and was not intended as a shift in U.S. policy toward the P.L.O., Israel and its supporters strongly protested it as a betrayal of the official line. The fact that the Carter administration gave in to

this criticism and allowed Young to resign indicates the strength of Israel's position in the U.S. Presidential candidate John Connally encountered this same strength when he stated that Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories and the creation of some type of autonomous entity for Palestinian Arabs would provide a fair solution to the Middle East conflict. This approach had been advocated by others previously and was not far from the agreements reached at Camp David. But a Presidential candidate publicly expressing such views brought waves of protest and even Connally conceded he had lost the Jewish vote. Further complicating relations between the two countries was the public debate on the Middle East conducted between leaders of the American black community. The Young incident opened the issue of U.S. Middle East policy among blacks, with Jesse Jackson and Joseph Lowery leading the discussions. This group came out in favor of U.S. recognition of the P.L.O. and traveled to the Middle East to meet with Palestinian leaders. Vernon Jordan of the Urban League responded by criticizing Jackson and Lowery and reaffirming the close ties of blacks and Jews on civil rights issues. These incidents illustrate that the relationship between America and Israel is a dynamic one involving many elements. But U.S. pressure was the primary force in working out the Camp David Accords and the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Increased aid makes Israel more dependent on the U.S., particularly in light of the poor state of the Israeli economy. So despite the complexities involved, U.S. influence has been and will continue to be the most significant factor in producing any change in Israeli

foreign policy.

This does not make progress toward a lasting peace inevitable. Commitment to the racist and expansionist goals of Zionism, a rigid political structure, and the closed nature of the country's leadership limit the ability of Israel to make the changes in policy necessary to bring an end to the conflict. The inertia of past policies is continuing, as illustrated by the periodic expropriation of more Arab land for settlements, the frequent pronouncements of historic and religious rights to the occupied territories, and the replacement of a somewhat flexible Foreign Minister Moshe Dayan with an ultra-conservative follower of Jabotinsky, Yitzhak Shamir. Such actions indicate how slow and difficult the process of resolving the Middle East conflict will be. Zionist ideology, its translation into government policy, the country's political structure, and its elitist leadership are to a large degree responsible for this. The dangers of war and its consequences that are a part of this situation will insure the continuation of external pressures which will be helpful in bringing about a more flexible Israeli policy. However, domestic politics in Israel has so far worked against peace, stability, and justice for all parties in the Middle East conflict and changes in the the internal situation of Israel must occur before these goals can be achieved.

## CHAPTER END NOTES

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<sup>16</sup>Ben Halpern, The Idea of the Jewish State (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969), pp.142,345.

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#### Chapter 4

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## Chapter 6

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